



South Texas
COLLEGE OF LAW
— HOUSTON —

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South Texas College of Law Houston
Student Handbook
2020 – 2021

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APPLICABILITY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS WHO BEGAN BEFORE 2019 FALL

The faculty has adopted an amended curriculum and corresponding changes to the Academic Rules and Regulations effective for students whose enrollment in South Texas College of Law Houston began in the **2019 fall semester** or later. Those amended standards are presented in the following pages of this Student Handbook.

For those students whose enrollment in South Texas College of Law Houston began **before** the 2019 fall semester, the academic standards are as follows:

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

For students who first enrolled before 2017 fall

A candidate for a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree must meet all entrance requirements, complete with a passing grade in all required courses, earn at least 90 credit hours with a passing grade, **and a cumulative grade average of 2.200 or better**. The Doctor of Jurisprudence degree must be completed no earlier than 24 months and no later than 84 months after initial enrollment (ABA Standard 304c).

REQUIRED COURSES

For students who first enrolled before 2019 fall

- Civil Procedure
- Constitutional Law
- Contracts I and II
- Criminal Law
- Evidence
- Federal Income Taxation
- Legal Research and Writing I and II
- Professional Responsibility
- Professional Skills Courses
- Property I and II
- Substantial Writing Requirement
- Torts I and II

For students who first enrolled in 2018 spring (full-time start) and 2017 fall (part-time start)

In addition to the courses listed above, the following courses are required for graduation:

- Criminal Procedure
- First Amendment Law

VISITING OTHER ABA-APPROVED LAW SCHOOLS

For students who first enrolled before 2019 spring

STCL Houston students can receive up to 30 hours of credit toward completion of their degree by taking non-required courses as a visiting student at another ABA-approved law school. To do so, students must obtain advance written approval from the Registrar by submitting a Letter of Good Standing Request form, course descriptions for all courses requested for transfer, and a program brochure for any non-cosponsored study abroad program. A letter of standing will be sent to the other law school only if the following criteria are met:

- Complete no fewer than 30 semester credit hours at STCL Houston
- **Have a cumulative GPA of 2.800 or higher** and not be on Academic Supervision
- Pay all outstanding balances due to STCL Houston

Credit will be transferred to STCL Houston only if the following criteria are met:

- The course received prior approval from the Registrar
- The grade for the course is not lower than the minimum grade average required for graduation at the school attended (*i.e.*, a grade of C or better is generally required in each and every course)
- Courses requested for transfer from other Houston law schools are not offered at STCL Houston

Credit for external placements will not be granted except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Associate Dean for Experiential Education having responsibility for clinical programs.

PROBATIONARY RULE

For students who first enrolled before 2017 fall

Any student whose **cumulative GPA falls below 2.200** in any semester subsequent to his/her first two full semesters will not be immediately dismissed but will be given, after academic counseling, the remainder of his/her current enrollment period

(or, if the student is not currently enrolled, one succeeding probationary enrollment period) to attain a **cumulative GPA of 2.200**. Failure to attain a **cumulative GPA of 2.200** by the end of such probationary period will result in immediate dismissal for academic deficiency.

PROBATIONARY FINAL DISMISSAL RULE

For students who first enrolled before 2017 fall

1. Any student who successfully raises his/her cumulative GPA after application of the Probationary Rule, but who thereafter fails a second time to **maintain a 2.200 cumulative GPA**, will be immediately and finally dismissed for academic deficiency.
2. A student dismissed for academic deficiency is dropped administratively from all classes and is excluded from further attendance. Individual professors have no authority or discretion to permit further attendance by such students. A dismissed student is not eligible to continue employment with the college under circumstances that require student status.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY

For students who first enrolled before 2017 fall

A student on academic probation (**GPA below 2.200**) cannot:

1. Hold office in any student organization. Students taking office must certify their satisfactory academic standing. If an officer's GPA drops below the requirement during his/her term in office, he/she must resign immediately. An officer's failure to resign will result in the organization's termination and loss of all privileges.
2. Be assigned to, or enter, any intramural or interschool moot court, mock trial, client counseling, negotiation, or other advocacy competition. Students who fail to meet academic requirements will be disqualified from any extracurricular competitions in which they have entered. If appropriate, STCL Houston will withdraw its sponsorship of the competition in question.
3. Participate in Law Review, Corporate Counsel Review, or Journal of International Economic Law. Students who fail to meet academic requirements will be administratively dismissed from participation in these programs.

ACADEMIC SUPERVISION

For students who first enrolled prior to 2019 spring (full-time start) or prior to 2018 fall (part-time start)

A student will be subject to the additional requirements of academic supervision in either of the following two circumstances:

- A **full-time student's** cumulative GPA is **lower than 2.800** immediately after having attempted 30 credit hours or having completed 2 semesters, whichever occurs first.
- A **part-time student's** cumulative GPA is **lower than 2.800** immediately after having attempted 30 semester hours or having completed 4 semesters or sessions, whichever occurs first.

For students who first enrolled in 2018 spring (full-time start) or in 2017 fall (part-time start)

In addition to other requirements for graduation applicable to all students, a student under Academic Supervision must also satisfy the following special requirements as a condition of graduation:

1. Enroll and receive a passing grade the following five courses:
 - Agency and Partnership
 - Corporations
 - Family Law
 - Secured Transactions
 - Wills, Trusts & Estates
2. Enroll and receive a passing grade in the law school's two credit hour, graded Bar Preview course in the fall or spring semester before graduation or the semester before taking the bar exam, whichever comes first.

BAR EXAMINATION 86-HOUR RULE

For students who first enrolled before 2017 fall

The rules governing admission to the State Bar of Texas permit a person to sit for the bar exam if he or she has graduated with a J.D. degree or has satisfied all J.D. requirements “except for no more than four credit hours...” Accordingly, a student may be certified to take the Texas Bar Exam before graduation, if the student has met the requirements of the “86-hour Rule” and has settled all balances on his/her account.

Students who plan to take the bar exam under the “86-hour rule” must adhere to the following:

- The required 86 hours must be indicated on the student’s official record by the end of the fall semester for the February exam and by the end of the spring semester for the July exam.
- A student must have a **cumulative GPA of at least 2.200** to be certified for the exam.
- If a student takes the bar exam before graduation, he or she may not receive final grades in time to be sworn in with other successful bar candidates. Grades are due 28 days after the date of the last final examination. The college does not request early grades. The Office of the Registrar certifies a candidate as a graduate upon receipt and posting of all grades and verification that all graduation requirements have been met. The certification date may not be earlier than the day after the official date of graduation.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

For policies related to COVID19 click here.

The Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) Degree

The JD degree program at South Texas College of Law Houston (STCL Houston) combines classroom instruction with practical skills development to train competent, confident lawyers who adhere to high ethical standards. Instructors use case studies, Socratic Method, role-playing, writing, research, and analysis to provide students with a comprehensive legal education. In addition, skills institutes, mock trial, moot court, and legal clinic programs allow students to apply skills learned in the classroom to actual cases.

Learning Outcomes for Graduates of South Texas College of Law Houston

South Texas College of Law Houston strives to offer a rigorous program of legal education designed to teach its graduates the knowledge, skills, and professionalism needed for the practice of law and to prepare them for admission to law practice. The law school's goal is to educate its graduates to become responsible members of the legal profession dedicated to providing highly competent, effective, and ethical legal representation for their clients.

To achieve those objectives, the faculty of the law school has identified the Learning Outcomes described below. Taken together, these Learning Outcomes describe the faculty's expectations for the knowledge, skills, and professionalism South Texas College of Law Houston students should have when they graduate. Every course in the law school curriculum is designed to contribute to the attainment of some, but not all, of these Learning Outcomes, and each course will emphasize a particular subset of them.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome 1: Substantive Law and Legal Process Knowledge

Graduates of the law school will demonstrate mastery of the foundational areas of legal knowledge and legal processes with the proficiency suitable for a competent entry-level practitioner.

Learning Outcome 2: Legal Analysis, Reasoning, and Problem Solving

Graduates of the law school will demonstrate the ability to perform legal analysis, legal reasoning, and legal problem solving with the proficiency suitable for a competent entry-level practitioner.

Learning Outcome 3: Legal Research

Graduates of the law school will be able independently to conduct effective legal research with the proficiency suitable for a competent entry-level practitioner.

Learning Outcome 4: Other Professional Skills, Including Effective Communication

Graduates of the law school will be able to perform such other professional skills as are appropriate for a new lawyer in their chosen areas of specialization with proficiency appropriate for a competent entry-level practitioner.

Learning Outcome 5: Professional and Ethical Responsibility

Graduates of the law school will be able to demonstrate an ability to exercise the professional judgment and ethical standards expected of a competent entry-level practitioner.

Learning Outcome 6: Self-Management and Collaboration

Graduates of the law school will be able to use the skills and concepts required for the effective and efficient management of law practice with the proficiency suitable for a competent entry-level practitioner.

Degree Requirements (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2017 fall)

A candidate for a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree must meet all entrance requirements, complete with a passing grade in all required courses, earn at least 90 credit hours with a passing grade, and a cumulative grade average of 2.300 or better. The Doctor of Jurisprudence degree must be completed no earlier than 24 months and no later than 84 months after initial enrollment (ABA Standard 304c).

All required courses must be completed at STCL Houston unless they are accepted when transferring to the college. No more than 30 credit hours can be earned at other ABA-accredited law schools. If any of these requirements are not met, the

anticipated graduation date will move to the next semester. All requirements must be met no later than one year after the original anticipated graduation term. The degree will be conferred in the semester when all requirements are finally met.

Required Courses (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for Students that Commenced Before 2019 Fall)

- Civil Procedure I and II
- Constitutional Law
- Contracts I and II
- Criminal Law
- Criminal Procedure
- Evidence
- Federal Income Taxation
- First Amendment Law
- Introduction to Law Study
- Legal Research and Writing I and II
- Professional Responsibility
- Professional Skills Courses
- Property I and II
- Substantial Writing Requirement
- Torts I and II

Course Sequence – First 43 Hours

Students will be administratively assigned to sections for their first 30 hours (full-time students) or 43 hours (part-time students) of required courses. Students cannot deviate from their assigned pattern or change enrollment status for the first academic year. A student cannot enroll in an elective course, upper-level required course, or study abroad program unless he or she has completed, or is concurrently enrolled in, the first 43 hours of required courses.

<u>Full Time Students</u>	<u>Cr Hrs.</u>	<u>Part Time Students</u>	<u>Cr Hrs.</u>
First Semester		First Year Fall	
Civil Procedure I	3	Contracts I	3
Contracts I	3	Introduction to Law Study	1
Criminal Law	3	Legal Research and Writing I	3
Introduction to Law Study	1	Torts I	<u>3</u>
Legal Research and Writing I	3	Total hours	10
Torts I	<u>3</u>		
Total hours	16	First Year Spring	
		Civil Procedure I	3
Second Semester		Criminal Law	3
Civil Procedure II	3	Legal Research and Writing II	<u>2</u>
Contracts II	3	Total hours	8
Legal Research and Writing II	2		
Property I	3	First Year Summer*	
Torts II	<u>3</u>	Contracts II	3
Total hours	14	Torts II	<u>3</u>
		Total hours	6
Third Semester		Second Year Fall	
Constitutional Law	4	Civil Procedure II	3
Evidence	3	Constitutional Law	4
Federal Income Taxation	3	Property I	<u>3</u>
Property II	3	Total hours	10
Electives	<u>3</u>		
Total hours maximum	16	Second Year Spring	
		Evidence	3
		Federal Income Taxation	3
		Property II	3
		Electives	<u>2</u>
		Total hours maximum	11

Additional Required Courses

Criminal Procedure	4
First Amendment Law	2
Professional Responsibility (by 60th hour)	3
Substantial Writing	2
Experiential Learning (skills courses)	<u>6</u> minimum

*This is the only required summer session.

Degree Planning Resources

Course Listings

Course listings is a searchable resource available on the law school's website that provides course details, descriptions, prerequisites, and information regarding books for selected courses. Courses are searchable by term, course name, professor, and course type (e.g. Bar Courses, Skills Courses, Paper Seminars).

Pathways to Practice

Developed by STCL Houston professors, Pathways to Practice contains suggested curriculum plans and accompanying resources for 16 different subject areas, from Civil Litigation to International Economic Law.

Upper level required courses:

Professional Responsibility is a required course and must be completed no later than the semester or session in which a student completes his or her 60th credit hour.

First Amendment Law and **Criminal Procedure** courses are required courses and must be completed before graduation.

Professional Skills Courses: Each student is required to take at least six credit hours of lawyering skills coursework. Any course listed as a skills course in the [Course Listings](#) and on the semester schedule will count toward this requirement.

Substantial Writing Requirement (after completion of 45 hours): This requirement can be satisfied by completion of one of the following: (1) earn a grade of C or better in a **seminar** for which a research paper of at least 5,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and tabular material) is the basis for a grade; or (2) earn a grade of C or better on a [supervised research paper](#) under the direction of a full-time faculty member; or (3) complete all requirements for academic credit for [Law Review](#), including completion of all writing assignments and a minimum of four semesters' enrollment; or (4) satisfy all requirements for academic credit for [Journal of International Economic Law](#), including completion of all writing requirements and a minimum of two semesters' service.

Skills Courses

Skills courses fall into three categories: (1) advocacy, (2) clinics, and (3) drafting and research.

Advocacy Program

Students who have completed 20 or more credit hours are eligible to participate in advocacy activities. Students with less than 20 credit hours are eligible to participate in only the written and oral presentations made in connection with the Legal Research and Writing II course. For more information and participation requirements, visit the [Advocacy Program](#) page.

Clinical Program

The Clinical Program at South Texas College of Law Houston offers three types of experiential learning: Academic Externships, Direct Representation Clinics, and Community-Based Clinics. Successful participation in any of these clinics counts toward completion of a student's professional skills course requirement. All clinics are graded as Honors Pass/Pass/Low Pass/Fail. To view a complete list of the law school's legal clinics, visit the [Clinics](#) page. Course availability and enrollment requirements can be found on the semester schedule or the Course Listings.

Academic Externships

The Academic Externship program includes field placement in an unpaid, semester-long internship with a government or other nonprofit organization and mandatory enrollment in the accompanying weekly seminar, Lawyering Skills and Professional Values. Externs must devote a minimum of 8 hours per week at their field placement, beginning no more than one week before the start of the semester, and must contribute 50 hours per credit hour earned. Contact Professor Dennis or Benjamin Santillan in the Clinical Programs Office to discuss possible placements and attain written approval to enroll. To enroll, students must obtain an approval signature from the Clinical Program offices and submit the [Student Information and Acknowledgements](#) form to the Registrar's Office.

Direct Representation and Community-Based Clinics

Most direct representation and community-based clinics require that students have completed 45 credit hours. A student must contribute 45 hours in the clinic for each hour of academic credit received. Students enrolled in direct representation or community-based clinics are required to attend a one-day boot camp during the first week of classes. The specific date for the applicable semester is posted on the semester schedule.

Drafting and Research

Most drafting and research courses require that students have completed 45 credit hours. Descriptions and course prerequisites are available via the Course Listings page.

Course Limits

<i>Type of Course</i>	<i>Maximum Hours/Number of Courses Allowed</i>	<i>Course Choices</i>
Seminars	3 Courses	Paper Seminars or Supervised Research
Reviews and Competitions	6 Hours	ADR Competition, Corporate Counsel Review, Journal of International Economic Law, Law Review and/or Moot Court Competition
Clinical Program	9 Hours	Including academic externships, direct representation and/or community-based clinics
Trial Advocacy Course	1 Course	Civil Trial, Criminal Trial or Family Law Trial
Transactional Capstone Courses	1 Course	Corporate, Energy, International Business, Oil & Gas or Real Estate
Transactional Foundation Courses	1 Course	Contract Building Blocks or Contract Negotiation and Drafting

Dropping an advocacy course (Appellate, Civil Pretrial, Civil Trial, Criminal Trial, and Family Law Trial) or other clinical course after the first day of classes requires express written permission from the professor. If the professor does not give permission and a student chooses not to fulfill his/her obligations, the student will receive an "F" for the course.

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

Background

South Texas College of Law Houston (the law school) has adopted policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded that conform to or exceed those established by the American Bar Association (the ABA)¹ and by the Department of Education.² ABA Standard 310(b) provides as follows:

A "credit hour" is an amount of work that reasonably approximates:

- (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in subparagraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

The ABA's *Interpretation 310-1* explains that 50 minutes is sufficient for one hour of direct faculty instruction and that the fifteen-week period may include one week for a final examination. This interpretation allows the law school to modify its normal 60-minute hour when necessary.

The Academic Calendar

The law school's academic calendar for both the fall and spring semesters consists of fourteen weeks of class meetings followed by a two-week examination period. The summer session consists of seven weeks of class meetings followed by a one-week examination period. The summer and winter intersessions are one week of class sessions coupled with an examination, paper, or project.

Credit Hour Policy

The credit hour is the basic unit of academic credit granted by the law school. It reflects (but typically exceeds) the Carnegie unit that has served as the traditional unit of measure in American higher education. For courses offered by the law school, one semester credit hour is equivalent to (a) one hour (60 full minutes) of faculty instruction time per week for 14 weeks, plus an additional week for a final examination, for a total of 900 minutes (840 minutes of direct instruction and 60 minutes of examination) or 15 hours per credit hour; and (b) a minimum of two hours (120 minutes) of student preparation time outside of the classroom each week for 14 weeks, plus an additional week for a final examination, for a total of 1,800 minutes (120 minutes per week for 15 weeks) or 30 hours per credit hour. Thus, for each semester credit hour, students should have a minimum of 45 hours of rigorous engagement with the course material and activities directed toward the course learning outcomes.

If a course does not meet every week or does not have an examination, an equivalent amount of time will be allocated during the semester to direct classroom contact and student out-of-class work per week.

An equivalent amount of work is required for each semester credit hour awarded in clinics, field placements, simulation courses, co-curricular offerings, and any other academic work for which the law school awards academic credit.

Credit Hour Standards by Term

The measure of instructional contact time and out-of-class preparation or other course activity time may be adjusted to reflect the varying lengths of the law school’s academic terms. The typical minimum required direct faculty contact time and out-of-class student engagement for the regular long semesters, summer sessions, and winter and summer intersessions are set out below.

Fall and Spring Semesters

Courses offered during the fall and spring semesters are scheduled to meet for fourteen weeks followed by a two-week examination period. A typical semester looks like this:

Credits	Faculty Contact/Week	Faculty Contact/Semester	Student Preparation/Week	Student Preparation/Semester	Total Student Engagement per Semester
1	50 minutes	750 minutes	120 minutes	1,800 minutes	2,550 minutes
2	100 minutes	1,500 minutes	240 minutes	3,600 minutes	5,100 minutes
3	150 minutes	2,250 minutes	360 minutes	5,400 minutes	7,650 minutes
4	200 minutes	3,000 minutes	480 minutes	7,200 minutes	10,200 minutes

Summer Sessions

Courses offered during the summer sessions typically are scheduled to meet for seven weeks followed by a one-week examination period. The typical summer session looks like this:

Credits	Faculty Contact/Week	Faculty Contact/Session	Student Preparation/Week	Student Preparation/Session	Total Student Engagement per Session
1	120 minutes	900 minutes	240 minutes	1,800 minutes	2,700 minutes
2	240 minutes	1,800 minutes	480 minutes	3,600 minutes	5,400 minutes
3	360 minutes	2,700 minutes	720 minutes	5,400 minutes	8,100 minutes
4	480 minutes	3,600 minutes	960 minutes	7,200 minutes	10,800 minutes

Winter and Summer Intersessions

Courses offered during the winter and summer intersessions are designed to focus on legal skills training. They will meet for one week, but students may be expected to perform course work before the session begins, during the session, and after the session has concluded. This outside work may consist of course-related reading, preparation for in-class performance, projects, or other academically-related work directed toward the course’s learning outcomes. The typical intersession looks like this:

Credits	Faculty Contact/Session	Student Preparation/Session	Total Student Engagement per Session
1	840 minutes	1,800 minutes	2,640 minutes
2	1,680 minutes	3,600 minutes	5,280 minutes

Credit for Student-Edited Law Journals

Student members of law journals are eligible to receive one semester credit hour per semester for performing at least 45 hours of academically-related work, including legal research and writing on a note or comment, reading and evaluating journal submissions, or editing articles. Students are responsible for maintaining a weekly log of their hours for review by the faculty advisor of the journal at the conclusion of each semester or session. Academic credit will be awarded on a high pass/pass/low pass/fail basis.

Credit for Moot Court, Mock Trial, and ADR Competitions

Students selected to participate in intercollegiate moot court, mock trial, and ADR competitions are eligible to receive one semester credit hour per semester for 45 hours of academically-related work, including legal research, brief writing, appellate advocacy, trial advocacy, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and the like. Students are responsible for maintaining a log of their hours for review by the faculty advisor or coach at the conclusion of each semester. Academic credit will be awarded on a high pass/pass/low pass/fail basis.

Credit for Clinics and Academic Externships

Each law school clinic and externship placement includes a classroom component. For clinics, students receive one semester credit hour for performing 45 hours of supervised law practice-related work connected with clinic client representation or other activities directed toward the clinic's learning outcomes. Clinic students also must fully participate in the classroom component of the clinic in order to receive credit. For academic externships, students receive one semester credit hour for performing 50 hours of supervised law practice-related work in their field placements. Full participation in the classroom component is required of all academic externship students; they are also responsible for submitting weekly journals and timesheets for regular review by a faculty member. Academic credit is awarded on a high pass/pass/low pass/fail basis.

Online Courses

Until recently, the law school rarely offered courses online. When such courses are proposed, they must meet the definition of standard faculty contact time within the duration of the online version (*i.e.*, typically 900 minutes per credit hour). A course where instructors and students do not meet in the same space must be consistent in terms of quality, assessment, learning outcomes, and course requirements as the equivalent course offered face-to-face. For synchronous courses, *i.e.* those courses where students participate in direct faculty instruction remotely as it takes place, the remote participation – actively monitored by the faculty member – will be treated as the equivalent of face-to-face class meetings. For asynchronous courses, *i.e.* those courses offered without any required face-to-face, contemporaneous faculty interaction, a week of instructional time is any given seven-day period in which at least one session of regularly scheduled instruction or examination occurs. Faculty must demonstrate active academic engagement through interactive methods which could include, but are not limited to, viewing an interactive recorded lecture, narrated PowerPoint presentation, or podcast; submitting an academic assignment; taking an examination, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; attending a virtual study group assigned by the instructor; contributing to an academic online discussion; or engaging in contact with the faculty member and class peers related to the academic subject matter of the course (as on discussion boards or chat rooms). Simply logging on, either by faculty or students, does not constitute active learning.

Procedures for Ensuring Compliance with the Law School's Credit Hour Policy

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that individual course offerings comply with the law school's credit hour policy resides with the faculty. As new courses are proposed, the proponent has the burden of showing that the amount of direct faculty contact and out-of-class student engagement with the course learning outcomes and course requirements satisfies the law school's credit hour policy, and the Curriculum Committee should review the proposed credit hour statement, syllabus, and course requirements and determine before granting approval of the course as an experimental offering that it will meet the requirements of that policy. Thereafter, before recommending to the full faculty approval of the course as a permanent course offering, the Curriculum Committee must make an affirmative determination that the course meets the minimum requirements for the credit hours proposed for the course. The full faculty's approval of the course as a permanent part of the law school's curriculum represents, among other things, its affirmative determination that the amount of student work required by the course satisfies the credit hour policy. The Curriculum Committee and Associate Dean for Academics shall have initial responsibility for monitoring the continuing compliance with the law school's Credit Hour Policy and may require corrections of any deficiencies.

Special Academic Opportunities

Joint Degree Program

The interaction between law and business is deep and pervasive. Two joint JD/MBA degree programs – one with the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University, the other with the Cameron School of Business at the University of St. Thomas – provide excellent opportunities for South Texas College of Law Houston students interested in careers combining law and banking, entrepreneurship, finance, international business, or other business and commercial interest. More information on how both joint degree programs permit law students to earn the JD and MBA degrees is available on the [JD/MBA](#) page.

Certificate in Transactional Law Practice

The Transactional Law Practice Certificate Program provides a comprehensive and integrated course of study through which students develop competence in business-related legal matters, including assisting clients with planning and implementation of business transactions; negotiating and drafting legal documents; and advising and counseling clients on the applicable laws and regulations governing various aspects of the deal.

Business background or experience is not necessary to participate in this program. Students must apply for admission to the program after completing the first 30 credit hours of required courses and before completing 45 credit hours or during their third semester of full-time study. Exceptions will be made only in rare cases. For more information about admission criteria and benefits of the Transactional Law Certificate program, contact the program director.

Certificate Requirements

To receive the certificate, students must successfully satisfy each of the following:

» A 3.333 cumulative grade point average for all certificate-related courses and a 3.000 overall cumulative law school GPA

» Three required core business law courses:

- Corporations
- Agency and Partnership
- Secured Transactions

» Three of the following elective business-related courses:

- Antitrust Law
- Business Bankruptcy
- Business Planning
- Corporate Finance Law
- Corporate Taxation
- Environmental Law
- Intellectual Property Survey
- International Business Transactions
- Partnership and Subchapter S Taxation
- Payment Systems
- Real Estate Development
- Real Estate Finance Law
- Sale and Leasing of Goods
- Securities Regulation

» One of the following foundational transactional skills courses (typically taken before final semester):

- Contracts Negotiation and Drafting
- Contract Building Blocks
- Commercial Real Estate Finance Practice

» One of the following capstone transactional skills courses (typically taken in final semester):

- Transactional Skills – Corporate
- Transactional Skills – Real Estate
- Transactional Skills – International Business
- Transactional Skills – Energy

» Satisfaction of the substantial writing requirement by writing on a business law or transactional law practice-related topic.

Exchange and Study Abroad Programs

STCL Houston typically co-sponsors two full-semester and several summer study abroad programs. All classes in the summer program are taught in English, have an international or comparative law focus, and count toward the JD degree. Based on the program chosen, the grading will reflect STCL Houston's grading system or reflect a co-sponsoring school's scale that may not include pluses and minuses. Students must meet the visiting student requirements to be eligible for participation in study-abroad courses. Credits earned in any summer study abroad program can amount to no more than one hour credit in excess of the total number of weeks of study. For more information about study abroad programs, visit the Office of International Programs (*Room 835*) or the [Study Abroad](#) page.

Consortium for Innovative Legal Education

South Texas College of Law Houston is a member of the Consortium for Innovative Legal Education (CILE), an organization made up of four independent ABA-accredited and AALS-member law schools. The other three participating law schools are California Western School of Law, New England Law Boston, and Mitchell Hamline School of Law. CILE offers shared study abroad experiences and courses that are fully transferrable among the member schools, giving students access to a broader range of course offerings. For more information about CILE, visit www.cile.edu.

The Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution

The Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution (FECCR) has as its primary mission the education of law students in the theoretical foundations and practical applications of dispute resolution procedures, law, and policy. The FECCR serves as the focal point within STCL Houston for dispute resolution education. Students are provided opportunities for learning about the variety of dispute resolution methods primarily through courses, clinics, and competitions. For more information, visit the [Frank Evans Center](#) page or the FECCR office.

Visiting Other ABA-Approved Law Schools (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2019 spring)

STCL Houston students can receive up to 30 hours of credit toward completion of their degree by taking non-required courses as a visiting student at another ABA-approved law school. To do so, students must obtain advance written approval from the Registrar by submitting a Letter of Good Standing Request form, course descriptions for all courses requested for transfer, and a program brochure for any non-cosponsored study abroad program. A letter of standing will be sent to the other law school only if the following criteria are met:

- Complete no fewer than 30 semester credit hours at STCL Houston
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.000 or higher and not be on Academic Supervision
- Pay all outstanding balances due to STCL Houston

Credit will be transferred to STCL Houston only if the following criteria are met:

- The course received prior approval from the Registrar
- The grade for the course is not lower than the minimum grade average required for graduation at the school attended (*i.e.*, a grade of C or better is generally required in each and every course)
- Courses requested for transfer from other Houston law schools are not offered at STCL Houston

Credit for external placements will not be granted except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Associate Dean for Experiential Education having responsibility for clinical programs.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Student Enrollment

All students are required to enroll for classes during each fall and spring semester. Students who fail to register for any long semester or drop all courses for any given semester will be considered fully withdrawn from the law school and unable to re-enroll without prior approval from the Registrar.

Term	Full-Time	Part-Time
Fall/ Spring Semesters	12-16	8-11
Summer Session	6-9	3-5

Term	Full-Time	Three-quarter Time	One-half Time
Fall/ Spring Semesters	12	9	6
Summer Session	6	5	3

Students must submit a [Course Add/Drop Waiver](#) form to the Registrar to request approval for an overload (17-18 hours) or an underload (less than 8 hours) in a fall or spring semester. Students in their final semester who need fewer than 8 hours to graduate are permitted, without prior approval, to enroll for fewer hours than stated above. Students are not allowed to register for more than 9 hours in a summer session.

Work Limits

Full-time students are prohibited from working more than 20 hours per week while enrolled in the full-time program. Violations of this regulation could result in disciplinary action.

Attendance and Participation

Fall & Spring Semester Absences		Summer Session Absences	
Meetings per Week	Max Absences	Meetings per Week	Max Absences
1	2 (Drop on 3)	1	1 (Drop on 2)
2	5 (Drop on 6)	2	3 (Drop on 4)
		3	4 (Drop on 5)
		4	7 (Drop on 8)

Absences are not allowed for intersession courses.

Regular and punctual class attendance is imperative to the learning process. Students are expected to make every effort to attend 100 percent of scheduled classes and are required to attend at least 80 percent of regularly scheduled classes in each course in order to receive course credit. Faculty members maintain attendance records for their courses and can, at their discretion, distribute attendance roll sheets or employ other reasonable methods for enforcing the 80 percent attendance requirement. Absences in excess of 20 percent of regularly scheduled classes will result in the student being administratively dropped from the course with a "WF" and no refund of tuition, fees, or related costs. Drops for excessive absences may affect financial aid entitlements. Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, the Registrar, and Professors do not have authority to grant absences in excess of those allowed.

Every student sitting for a final examination will be required to sign a statement that he/she has attended at least 80 percent of the classes regularly scheduled for each course for which the student was enrolled during that semester. **A student's false declaration regarding attendance is an act of academic misconduct, subjecting the student to expulsion, suspension, or other discipline.**

Students are required to prepare all assignments, arrive to class on time, remain in attendance until class is dismissed or scheduled to end, and actively participate in classroom discussions. Failure to meet these standards could result in the deduction of up to two grade increments from the student's final grade, at the discretion of the professor. In severe cases of misconduct or unsatisfactory performance, a professor can request permission from the Associate Dean for Students to drop a student from the course.

Coursework Deadlines

Students must submit all coursework by the deadline imposed by the professor. Only the professor who imposes a deadline can grant an extension or waiver. An aggrieved student can appeal a professor's deadline decision directly to the Student

Appeals and Disciplinary Committee by contacting the Registrar's Office. This policy does not alter or extend the deadline for submission of final grades in a course.

Failure to meet the imposed deadline in Legal Research and Writing courses for submission of the final graded memorandum (in LRW I) and the appellate brief (in LRW II) will result in a "WF" for the course, which will be used in computing the student's grade point average. Legal writing professors will not grant deadline extensions except in extraordinary, adequately-documented circumstances such as hospitalization of a student or death of a close family member. Computer problems and/or transportation delays are not sufficient reasons for a deadline extension. Accordingly, students are strongly advised to have backup plans in case of such emergencies.

Distance Education

Distance education courses are those in which instruction is conducted primarily via electronic transmission rather than face-to-face interaction. Typically, a student can receive no more than four credit hours of distance education courses in a given semester and no more than fifteen distance education credit hours in total.

REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Add/Drop Procedures

A student who voluntarily drops, or who is administratively dropped, from a course after the last day to drop without receiving a failing grade (see [Academic Year Important Dates](#)), will receive a “WF,” which will affect the student’s grade point average. Similarly, a student who withdraws from or leaves the college at any time without following required withdrawal procedures will receive a “WF” in every course. With the permission of the Associate Dean for Students, a professor can drop any student from a course for unsatisfactory classroom performance or misconduct.

To drop a course after the late registration period ends, students must submit a [Course Add/Drop/Waiver](#) form to the Registrar’s Office. The drop will be effective on the date of receipt. For information about the financial ramifications of course drops, review the “Financial Policies” section of the Student Handbook.

Withdrawal without Academic Prejudice

Students must submit a [Withdrawal/Exit Form](#) with written justification to the Registrar’s Office **before** discontinuing their studies or taking a leave of absence. A withdrawal without academic prejudice will be granted for a period of one calendar year at a time for no more than two calendar years from the last term attended. Students who take an absence in excess of two years are required to reapply for admission with no credit granted for prior law school study.

Course Audits

STCL Houston students are not permitted to audit courses. STCL Houston alumni, licensed attorneys, and graduates of ABA-approved law schools can submit a [Non-Traditional Student Registration Form](#) to the Registrar’s Office to request to audit a course. STCL Houston alumni audit courses at no cost. All others must pay regular tuition and fees. Auditors listen and observe and are not permitted to take part in class discussions or examinations. Credit is not granted for audited courses; however, attendance is reflected on an official transcript.

Classroom Visitors

Children are not allowed in the classroom under any circumstances. Adult visitors can request prior permission from the professor and cannot visit more than once per semester.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Administration of Exams

All examinations are taken subject to these procedures and subject to the college's Rules and Policies concerning Academic Misconduct. Each student is responsible for reviewing, understanding, and adhering to the Academic Misconduct rules, in addition to the examination policies and procedures below.

Anonymity

Students must obtain a unique exam number via STANLEY each semester. Students must write their confidential exam number on every exam. Use of any other identifiers, including names, on an exam could result in disciplinary action up to and including a failing grade or expulsion. Students are prohibited from disclosing their examination numbers to, or discussing examinations with, any faculty member until **all** grades for the semester have been posted.

Timeliness

Each student must be ready to begin an examination **no later than five minutes** before the scheduled start of the examination.

Allowed and Prohibited Items

<i>ITEMS ALLOWED</i>	<i>ITEMS PROHIBITED</i>
Laptops (For Blue Book and/or Write On exams ONLY) Must use ExamSoft.	Electronic devices, e.g. cell phones, pagers, iPads, tablets
Pens, highlighters, pencils, and pencil sharpeners*	Wristwatches with alarms or cameras, fitness watches
Wallet (money purse), keys*	Backpacks, purses
Earplugs that do not cover ears	Noise cancelling headphones
Eyeglasses, eyeglass cases*	Food
Non-alcoholic beverages	Alcoholic beverages
Tissues, cough drops, medicine*	Books (Unless Open Book exam)
Books and/or Notes for Open Book/Open Notes exams ONLY	Notes (Unless Open Notes exam)

*These items are permitted in the testing room but must remain in the student's pockets or in clear plastic bags under the student's chair when not in use.

Reporting Exam Misconduct

Violations of the law school's rules concerning cheating and/or other academic misconduct regarding examinations should be immediately reported to the exam proctor and/or Registrar's office.

Deferred Examinations

Questions regarding the meaning or application of these rules should be addressed to the Registrar. Students must not request a deferred examination from a professor or otherwise indicate to the professor that an exam might be or has been deferred as such communication jeopardizes the anonymity of exam grading. If a request is denied and the student does not sit for the regularly scheduled examination, the student will be considered to have withdrawn from the course after the last day to drop without receiving a failing grade, a "WF" will be entered on his/her permanent record, and the "WF" counted in computing the student's grade point average. Students will be charged a \$50 deferral fee for each approved deferred examination. A flat \$50 deferral fee will be assessed when a student is approved to defer **all** examinations.

Students must take exams at the scheduled time with the exception of compelling circumstances, as defined below. Students with a qualified circumstance should submit a [Deferred Examination Request](#) to the Registrar's Office before the scheduled examination time. **Submission of this form and accompanying documentation does not guarantee approval.**

An examination **will be** deferred, subject to proper documentation, under the following circumstances:

- Illness of the student actually prevents the student from taking an exam, as documented by a physician's written certification to the Registrar's Office.
- A member of a student's immediate family becomes critically ill during the examination period.
- A member of a student's immediate family or his/her significant other has died.
- The birth of a student's child.

- A Sabbath or other religious observance precludes a student from taking an exam.
- A student is to attend a wedding, graduation, or other such special ceremony of his/her immediate family member, and the student could not have known before the last day to drop a course that the exam and special ceremony were in conflict.
- Due to extenuating circumstances, preparing for and taking the examination at the scheduled time would be severely prejudicial to the student.
- A student becomes ill **during** an examination and is unable to complete the examination. The student must seek approval from the Registrar to defer that examination *before* leaving campus.

An examination **will not be** deferred under the following circumstances:

- Two examinations are scheduled on the same day or consecutive days.
- A student has a professional opportunity that conflicts with scheduled examinations, except in the case of a student employed full-time.
- A student is late due to oversleeping, traffic, and all similar circumstances. The student will be allowed to sit for the examination in the time remaining. No extra time will be allowed when starting an examination late.
- A student wishes to leave early for the winter or summer break.

Rescheduling a Deferred Exam

An “Incomplete” will be entered on the student’s transcript until the deferred exam is taken and graded. Deferred examinations must be taken the next semester or session for which the student is registered and in which the course is offered, unless otherwise approved by the Registrar. Students should request advance permission from the professor to attend the class. Students attending class under this provision are not auditors.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with permanent and temporary disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), will receive reasonable accommodations, including but not limited to adjustments or modifications to course loads, examinations, and auxiliary services, to minimize the effect of the disability on the student’s educational opportunities.

In order to receive accommodations, a student must submit the Student Application for Accommodations and the requisite documentation to the Office of Student Academic Affairs at least 30 days in advance of requested services and/or accommodations. Students who identify physical barrier concerns should immediately report them to the Office of Student Academic Affairs. The documentation guidelines for documenting disabilities are available on the Campus Life tab on Stanley and in the Office of Student Academic Affairs. A non-inclusive referral list of qualified diagnosticians and health care providers is available in the Office of Student Academic Affairs.

If your Student Application for Accommodations is denied, you can pursue two actions:

1. Submit new or additional information that the college will consider, provided the information is submitted before the deadlines described above. You can discuss the feasibility of this option with the Office of Student Academic Affairs based on the reasons for the initial decision; the submission of additional information in no way guarantees a different outcome.
2. Appeal the decision to an ad hoc committee consisting of three members appointed by the ADA/504 Coordinator. To appeal, submit a letter to Assistant Dean Singleton stating the specific reasons of your appeal. The appeal does not include a hearing at which new evidence or oral arguments will be considered. The committee will not consider, for the first time, information that was not previously submitted to and considered by the administration in making the initial decision regarding a request for accommodations. The decision of the committee is final.

In case of a medical emergency that results in a disability, please contact the Office of Student Academic Affairs as soon as feasible and before the program and/or examination accommodation. Emergency requests must include appropriate and sufficient documentation. Students who identify physical barrier concerns should immediately report them to the Office of Student Academic Affairs.

GRADES

Grading System

The law school uses the alphabetical system of grading for most courses, with the exception of some skills courses, journals, and clinics which are graded on a pass/fail basis, as indicated in the Course Listings.

The correlation of numerical and letter grades is as follows:

A+	4.333
A	4.000
A-	3.667
B+	3.333
B	3.000
B-	2.667
C+	2.333
C	2.000
C-	1.667
D+	1.333
D	1.000
F	0.000
HP	Honors Pass
P	Pass
LP	Low Pass
U	Fail
Course dropped without prejudice	W
Incomplete	I
Course dropped administratively or after drop date or non-timely removal of Incomplete	WF

Method for Computing Averages

The grade in each course will be weighted in proportion to the credit hours assigned to the course. The cumulative grade average is obtained by adding the weighted numerical scores of all final grades (excluding pass/fail courses, “I” and “W” grades) and dividing that sum by the total credit hours for courses in which a final letter grade has been received. Each student’s average will be computed after all final grades are posted for each semester or session to determine academic probation and dismissal, Dean’s Honor List, or other grade-point-average-related designations. The existence of an “I” will not delay academic dismissal or probation. A student who receives a failing grade in any course can (*must, if a required course*) retake the course. Upon receipt of a passing grade therein, both the failing and passing grades will be included on the student’s permanent record and used in determining the student’s cumulative grade point average. While graded pass/fail coursework will not be used in computing averages, the semester credit hours will count toward graduation unless a “U” is received.

Assessment Methods

In all *required first-year courses* (except for Legal Research and Writing I and II), STCL Houston requires that faculty use a written final examination as the sole method for grading student academic performance. In *upper-level required courses* (Evidence, Federal Income Taxation, Property II, and Professional Responsibility), and in courses related to the Texas Bar Examination, faculty can use graded midterm examinations and/or graded quizzes in addition to a written final exam as the basis for assigning grades to students. In non-bar-related elective courses, seminars, and skills courses, faculty can employ any of the following alternative methods for evaluating all student performance:

- Take-home essay examinations with a time limit of 24, 48, or 72 hours
- Substantial research paper (at least 20 pages, exclusive of footnotes) in lieu of a final examination
- Short graded research paper in addition to a final examination
- Series of short graded research papers in lieu of a final examination
- Graded mid-term examinations and/or graded quizzes in addition to a final examination
- Course-related projects for skills courses (e.g., drafting documents, oral presentations or similar methods)
- Course-related project(s) in addition to a final examination
- Graded oral presentations in addition to a final examination or research paper

Within any particular class, all students will be evaluated using the same assessment methods.

Required First-year Grade Distribution

For all first-year required courses, grades assigned in classes of 40 or more students must conform to a mandatory grading curve with the following distribution, with a class grade point average between 2.850 and 3.150:

A+/A	9-16 percent
A+/A/A-	16-30 percent
C+/C/C-/D+/D/F	16-30 percent
C/C-/D+/D/F	9-16 percent

Retaking Required Courses

A student can retake a course only if he or she has earned an “F” or “WF.” If a student receives a failing grade in a required course, the student **must** retake the course in the next semester in which it is offered and the student is enrolled. If the failing grade is posted after the registration period for the subsequent semester, the student will be permitted to complete the other courses for which they are enrolled before retaking the failed course, subject to the [Academic Deficiency Policy](#). It is generally in the student’s best interest to repeat a failed course as soon as practicable. Grades of “F” or “WF” are not removed from a transcript or substituted by a retaken course and are used in GPA calculation.

Grade Reductions

A professor can deduct up to two grade increments (e.g., change a student’s grade from a B– to C+ or C) from the final grade of any student who, in the opinion of the professor, has been deficient in classroom punctuality, conduct and/or performance. A greater percentage of a student’s grade can be allocated to classroom performance only in those classes that are of seminar type or in which a paper or project is required in addition to or in lieu of a final examination. There is no system by which grades can be increased for outstanding classroom performance.

Grade Deadline

Grades are due in the Registrar’s Office no later than 28 days following the last day of exams.

Grading Notifications

Grades will be made available exclusively via STANLEY. The Registrar’s Office will not provide grades to students via email, over the telephone, or in person.

Review of Grades

After a faculty member has posted grades, the faculty member can, in his or her discretion, agree to discuss examinations with students before the grade deadline. After grades have been submitted, a professor may change a grade only after he/she has determined that a mathematical or transposition error, or other similar event not involving the exercise of discretion in grading, has occurred in the grading process and the change is approved by the full-time faculty at the next scheduled faculty meeting. The professor may not regrade a student’s work for substantive content after a final grade has been submitted.

A student has a right to review his or her examination paper with a professor, for the purposes of constructive analysis only, in those instances where the grade is C or below in a course completed in the first 20 hours of a student’s law study. This request must be made within two weeks following the deadline for faculty to turn in grades or within two weeks after the commencement of the next semester, whichever is later. In all other situations, the review of a final examination paper is at the discretion of the professor and must comply with any special procedure that a professor has instituted.

Incomplete Grades

“Incomplete” grades in courses with examinations must be removed the next term in which the student is registered and the course is offered, unless otherwise approved by the Registrar. The “Incomplete” will be changed to a “WF” if the grade is not removed within one year after the term of enrollment in the course. “Incomplete” grades in non-examination courses, including clinics, seminars and supervised research, must be completed by the end of the next long semester. If this deadline is not met, the “Incomplete” will be changed to a “WF”.

Class Ranking

Before graduation, ranks are by percentage only, based on the following categories: Upper 5%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, 33 1/3%, and 50%. This information is available via STANLEY at the end of each fall and spring term. Students are ranked based on semester credit hours:

1L	0-30 credit hours
2L	31-60 credit hours
3L	61+ credit hours

Upon graduating, individual class ranks are determined among those students in the same graduating class. A graduate can request his/her final graduate class rank by submitting a [Letter Request](#) form to the Registrar's Office.

HONORS & RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Dean's Honor List

A student is eligible for inclusion on the Dean's Honor List if he/she earns a minimum semester/session grade point average of 3.500 or better with no grade below B-. In addition to this GPA requirement, a full-time student must complete 12 or more credit hours during the fall or spring semesters and 6 or more credit hours during the 8-week summer session. A part-time student must complete 8 or more credit hours during the fall or spring semesters and no less than 3 hours in the summer session.

CALI Excellence for the Future Awards®

The CALI Excellence for the Future Awards® program recognizes a student's achievement of excellence in law studies. The award is given to the student with the highest grade in each class as determined by the professor. Awardees receive a printed certificate and a permanent URL virtual award to which they can link in their online resumes and biographies.

Law Fraternities

There are several law fraternities at South Texas College of Law Houston. For more information, please visit the [Fraternities](#) page. The Order of the Lytae is noted on the transcript.

Order of the Lytae

An honorary fraternity, the Order of the Lytae recognizes outstanding academic achievement. Student must have completed at least 45 hours of law studies at South Texas College of Law Houston to participate. Students must have an overall grade of at least "A-", with no grade below "B-", in the 45 credit hours preceding eligibility.

Pro Bono Honors Program

The South Texas College of Law Houston Pro Bono Honors Program seeks to encourage professionalism both by providing pro bono public service opportunities for students and by recognizing this service through a formal certificate program. Students are eligible to participate in the Pro Bono Honors Program after completing the first fifteen hours required for graduation. Students are required to commit a minimum of fifty hours of service to reach the "Honors" level. Students can perform their pro bono work at college-sponsored projects or initiate their own placement opportunities. Upon completion of fifty hours of service, students are awarded a Pro Bono Honors Program certificate at the spring Honors and Awards Ceremony, and a notation is placed on the student's official transcript. For program information, contact Associate Dean of Experiential Education Catherine Burnett or program coordinator Benjamin Santillan.

GRADUATION CEREMONY

The Doctor of Jurisprudence degree (JD) will be conferred upon students who have successfully completed all requirements of South Texas College of Law Houston for graduation. Typically, there is one ceremony in May for all three graduating classes each year:

- May – spring semester
- July – summer semester
- December – fall semester

Requirements

A candidate for a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree is required to:

- Submit a formal application for graduation.
- Pay all fees and tuition charges incurred before graduation.
- Participate in commencement, unless permission to graduate in absentia is granted by the Dean. This can be requested by submitting the [Absentia Form](#) to the Registrar’s Office.

Graduation with Honors

A final honors determination is made once all grades are received for the last semester of school and final class ranks are compiled. Honors designations will be printed on the diploma and noted on the student’s final transcript. For purposes of the commencement program, honors are based on the last available cumulative grade point average. Honor graduates will be recognized in the commencement program and will receive an honor cord to be worn during the graduation ceremony.

Honors Designation	Cumulative GPA Range
Summa Cum Laude (gold)	3.800 or higher
Magna Cum Laude (silver)	3.650 – 3.799
Cum Laude (white)	3.450 – 3.649

ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY POLICY AND APPEALS PROCESS

In applying the following rules, the cumulative GPA for purposes of the academic deficiency rules will be calculated as stated in the “Method of Computing Averages” section of the Academic Regulations.

Academic Risk, Dismissal and Probation

Academic Risk Status

Any student who fails to achieve a 2.400 cumulative GPA after his/her first long semester will be considered Academic Risk. Students will be required to schedule an appointment to meet with the Registrar. Students will also be required to enroll in and receive a passing grade in the college’s Advanced Legal Analysis course the following semester.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, during their second semester of enrollment, At-Risk students will be registered for Advanced Legal Analysis in lieu of Contracts II or Torts II (for full-time students) or in addition to the required courses (for part-time students). At-Risk students will make arrangements with the Registrar to reschedule the deferred course as soon as practicable. The Registrar’s Office will administratively drop any student determined to be At-Risk following the spring semester from any summer session courses in which they have enrolled.

Advanced Legal Analysis Course

The Advanced Legal Analysis course is a one-semester, three credit hour course for students who are academically at risk following their first semester of law school enrollment. The course is required and limited to all students whose first semester cumulative GPA is below 2.400. The course will be graded on a high pass/pass/low pass/fail basis. The course is designed to help students remediate basic law school skills in order to increase the prospects of academic success in the first year and provide academic intervention for those who are at risk of dismissal after their second semester. Since there is a close correlation between students’ first-year law school GPA and their eventual rate of passing the bar exam, students struggling in their third year of law school typically suffer from the same deficiencies as first-year students. Therefore, this course also will help students improve the law study and test-taking skills they will need in order to be successful on the bar exam.

Two-Semester Rule

Any full-time or part-time student who fails to achieve a cumulative 2.300 GPA after his/her first two long semesters will be immediately dismissed for academic deficiency.

Probationary Rule (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2017 fall)

Any student whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.300 in any semester subsequent to his/her first two full semesters will not be immediately dismissed but will be given, after academic counseling, the remainder of his/her current enrollment period (or, if the student is not currently enrolled, one succeeding probationary enrollment period) to attain a cumulative GPA of 2.300. Failure to attain a cumulative GPA of 2.300 by the end of such probationary period will result in immediate dismissal for academic deficiency.

Probationary Final Dismissal Rule (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enroll before 2017 fall)

Any student who successfully raises his/her cumulative GPA after application of the Probationary Rule, but who thereafter fails a second time to maintain a 2.300 cumulative GPA, will be immediately and finally dismissed for academic deficiency.

A student dismissed for academic deficiency is dropped administratively from all classes and is excluded from further attendance. Individual professors have no authority or discretion to permit further attendance by such students. A dismissed student is not eligible to continue employment with the college under circumstances that require student status.

Extracurricular Activities and Academic Deficiency (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2017 fall)

A student on academic probation (GPA below 2.300) cannot:

4. Hold office in any student organization. Students taking office must certify their satisfactory academic standing. If an officer's GPA drops below the requirement during his/her term in office, he/she must resign immediately. An officer's failure to resign will result in the organization's termination and loss of all privileges.
5. Be assigned to, or enter, any intramural or interschool moot court, mock trial, client counseling, negotiation, or other advocacy competition. Students who fail to meet academic requirements will be disqualified from any extracurricular competitions in which they have entered. If appropriate, STCL Houston will withdraw its sponsorship of the competition in question.
6. Participate in Law Review, Corporate Counsel Review, or Journal of International Economic Law. Students who fail to meet academic requirements will be administratively dismissed from participation in these programs.

Readmission Policy

A student who has been dismissed for academic deficiency will be considered for readmission only as a beginning student and only after at least two years have passed since the effective date of his/her dismissal. Any student applying for readmission must submit a new application for admission and may be required to retake the LSAT. The student must submit to the Admissions Office a statement describing the nature of interim work, activity, or studies which indicate a significantly stronger potential for the study of law.

Academic Supervision (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2019 fall)

A student will be subject to the additional requirements of academic supervision in either of the following two circumstances:

- A **full-time student's** cumulative GPA is lower than 3.000 immediately after having attempted 30 credit hours or having completed 2 semesters, whichever occurs first.
- A **part-time student's** cumulative GPA is lower than 3.000 immediately after having attempted 30 credit hours or having completed 4 semesters or sessions, whichever occurs first.

In addition to other requirements for graduation applicable to all students, a student under Academic Supervision must also satisfy the following special requirements as a condition of graduation:

3. Enroll and receive a passing grade the following five courses:
 - Agency and Partnership
 - Corporations
 - Family Law
 - Secured Transactions
 - Wills, Trusts & Estates
4. Enroll and receive a passing grade in the law school's two credit hour, graded Bar Preview course in the fall or spring semester before graduation or the semester before taking the bar exam, whichever comes first.

BAR EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Declaration of Intention to Study Law

All first-semester law students must file a [Declaration of Intention to Study Law](#) with the Texas Board of Law Examiners. The declaration requires information regarding a student’s educational qualifications, criminal history, mental health status, and other determinants of character and fitness.

Declaration Fees

Investigation Fee	\$150
Fingerprint Card Processing Fee	\$40
Late Filing Fee	\$150
Returned Check Fee	\$25

Declaration Deadlines

Fall Entrants	October 1
Spring Entrants	May 1

Application to Take Texas Bar Examination

The State Bar of Texas typically administers a combined multistate and essay examination at various locations throughout Texas each year in February and July, on the last Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the month. Assuming the *Declaration of Intention to Study Law* has been on file for the requisite period, you must also file a bar examination application by the dates outlined below.

Bar Examination Filing Periods

<i>Examination Date</i>	<i>Registration Opens</i>	<i>Timely Deadline</i>	<i>Absolute Deadline (late fee)</i>
February	June 30	September 1	December 1
July	December 2	February 1	April 1

Bar Examination Fees

<i>Fee Type</i>	<i>Texas Resident</i>	<i>Out-of-State Student</i>
Application Fee	\$150	\$150
Examination Fee	\$95	\$150
Investigation Fee	\$55	\$150
Fingerprint Card Processing Fee	N/A	\$40

Inquiries to State Board of Law Examiners

Applications and inquiries concerning the procedures for admission to the State Bar of Texas may be directed to the Board of Law Examiners at P.O. Box 13486, Austin, TX, 78711-3486 or (512) 463-1621. Examinees with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations via the [ATLAS portal](#) on the Board of Law Examiners website. Information about exam requirements and components is available at <https://ble.texas.gov/current-exam>.

Bar Examination 86-hour Rule (Click [here](#) for Applicability of Rules for students who first enrolled before 2017 fall)

The rules governing admission to the State Bar of Texas permit a person to sit for the bar exam if he or she has graduated with a J.D. degree or has satisfied all J.D. requirements “except for no more than four credit hours...” Accordingly, a student may be certified to take the Texas Bar Exam before graduation, if the student has met the requirements of the “86-hour Rule” and has settled all balances on his/her account.

Students who plan to take the bar exam under the “86-hour rule” must adhere to the following:

- The required 86 hours must be indicated on the student’s official record by the end of the fall semester for the February exam and by the end of the spring semester for the July exam.
- A student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.300 to be certified for the exam.
- If a student takes the bar exam before graduation, he or she may not receive final grades in time to be sworn in with other successful bar candidates. Grades are due 28 days after the date of the last final examination. The college

does not request early grades. The Office of the Registrar certifies a candidate as a graduate upon receipt and posting of all grades and verification that all graduation requirements have been met. The certification date may not be earlier than the day after the official date of graduation.

Temporary Trial Card

Texas state law permits qualified law students and qualified unlicensed law school graduates to apply for a temporary trial card, which allows them to participate in the trial of cases in Texas under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

A student is eligible for a temporary trial card if he or she is **not** on academic probation and has:

- Completed at least two-thirds (60) of the credit hours required for graduation, OR
- Completed at least half (45) of the credit hours required for graduation AND is currently enrolled in a clinical program for which a temporary bar card is required.

Each student must certify that he or she has read and is familiar with the Code of Professional Responsibility of the State Bar of Texas and will abide by those rules, including the grievance procedures of the State Bar.

Students can obtain a Temporary Trial Card Application on the State Bar of Texas website or through Ben Santillan, Clinical Programs Administrator, in room 1035T. Completed Applications should be returned to Ben Santillan for the Dean's Certificate and processing.

Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE)

All applicants for a Texas law license must pass the MPRE. A passing MPRE score is valid for five years from the date of exam administration. A passing Texas bar examination score is void if an applicant has not satisfied all admission requirements within two years of notification. The MPRE is administered three times per year. More information is available at www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre.

Bar Preview Course

STCL Houston's Bar Preview Course is designed to help students develop the skills required to prepare for and pass the bar exam. This course is a graded, two credit hour course. The course is required for students under Academic Supervision and students in their final semester whose GPA is below a 3.200 at the time of registration. Students must earn a passing grade to obtain STCL Houston certification to take the bar exam. **The Bar Preview course is not intended to be a substitute for a commercial bar preparation course.**

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Tuition, Fees, and Billing

Tuition and fees for fall and spring semesters are assessed at a flat rate based on a student's full-time or part-time status. Tuition and fees for summer sessions and intersessions are assessed on a per credit hour basis. Tuition and fees schedules are updated each academic year and made available on the [Tuition and Financial Aid](#) page. Tuition and fees, along with any prior balances, must be paid by the published due date unless a student has selected a deferred payment plan. Failure to meet payment deadlines will result in cancellation of all course registration.

The law school does not distribute mailed or printed invoices. Student account balances and billing information is available via STANLEY. Payment deadlines are posted online in the [Academic Year Important Dates](#).

Special Enrollment Circumstances

- ***Enrollment for One Credit Hour***

The law school will waive the Registration and General Services Fee for a student enrolled in only one credit hour in a course with no classroom component (Law Review, Moot Court, Corporate Counsel Review, or Journal of International Economic Law). Accordingly, it is not available to a person who drops after registration. If a student adds a course after registration, the Registration and General Service Fee will be assessed.

- ***Graduating Students***

Students who require seven or fewer hours to graduate will be charged tuition on a per credit hour basis, plus fees.

- ***Visiting Students and Audit Status***

Students enrolled as visiting students or auditors must pay all tuition and the \$300 Registration and General Services Fee **in full** at the time of registration.

Methods of Payment

STCL Houston accepts cash, personal or cashier's checks, or money orders. Payment must be made in U.S. dollars. The law school does not accept temporary checks, credit card checks, credit cards, debit cards, or wire transfers. All cash payments must be made in person in the Accounting Services Office. Student ID numbers are required on any check submitted for payment.

Payments may be submitted via:

- **Electronic Check** – Click "Pay by Check" at the bottom of the Student Account page in STANLEY.
- **Mail** – Mail a check or money order labeled with student ID number to:
South Texas College of Law Houston
Accounting Services
1303 San Jacinto Suite 823T
Houston, TX 77002
- **Drop Box** – Checks or money orders may be placed in the secure drop box located at the security desk in the atrium. Do not place cash in the drop box.
- **In Person** – Payments may be made in the Accounting Services Office (823T) Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Returned checks incur a \$25 fee. The law school does not automatically re-deposit returned checks. Failure to clear a returned check may result in criminal prosecution. The law school will not accept personal checks from anyone who has had two (2) checks returned. The act of canceling a submitted check does not constitute a withdrawal from courses. A returned check for tuition will result in cancellation of all courses. Students dropped for non-payment may re-enroll during late registration.

Deferred Tuition Payment Option

Under the Deferred Tuition Payment plan:

1. Fifty percent of tuition and a \$300 mandatory, nonrefundable Registration and General Services Fee must be paid by the published due date in any given semester. In addition to traditional payment methods, this deposit may be made with sufficient accepted financial aid in the form of unsubsidized loans, approved Graduate PLUS loans, Texas Education Grant funds, or institutional scholarships.
2. The remaining balance of tuition and fees is due by midterm, at 4 p.m. on the date specified in the tuition and fee schedule.

- Failure to make required payments will result in the denial of this payment option for any future enrollment period, exclusion from classes, and placement of a hold on a student's record.

If a student's deferred payment request is denied, payment is required in full by the published deadline.

Account Holds

Failure to make required payments will result in a student's account being placed on hold until payment is received. A hold will prevent the student from registering for classes, obtaining official records, receiving exam numbers, and accessing grades. Payments made by check or e-check are subject to a 10-day processing period before a hold can be released. To have a hold immediately released, a student must pay the past due amount by cash, cashier's check, or money order.

Late Registration and Penalty Fees

A late registration period is available during fall and spring semesters and the 8-week summer session. A \$40 late registration fee applies.

Refunds and Returns

Tuition refunds will be credited to a student's account if, before the fifth week of classes, (1) all courses are dropped, or (2) status is changed from full-time to part-time. Assessed fees, including seat deposits, are mandatory and non-refundable. Refund checks, if any, will be disbursed by the Accounting Services Office no sooner than 30 days from the date of the drop. Unless all courses are dropped, the refund will be mailed to the student's campus mailbox. If the student receives Title IV financial aid, any refund may be returned directly to the lender as required by federal law. Students are responsible for any balance due to the college as a result of dropping or withdrawing from courses. Students receiving Title IV aid are encouraged to meet with a financial aid counselor before dropping courses.

<i>Fall and Spring Semesters</i>	
<u>All courses dropped</u>	<u>Percent Tuition Refunded</u>
After registration and through the first week of classes	100%
During second week of classes	75%
During third week of classes	50%
During fourth week of classes	25%
After fourth week of classes	0%

<i>Summer Session</i>	
<u>All courses dropped</u>	<u>Percent Tuition Refunded</u>
After registration and through the first week of classes	100%
During second week of classes	50%
After second week of classes	0%

Intersessions

There are no drops or refunds for intersession courses after web registration closes.

Accounting Services Office Approvals

A student's account must be paid in full, including tuition, fees, returned checks, and delinquent library books before the college can honor a request for a letter of good standing, award a degree, or certify the student to take the bar examination. Graduating students must clear their accounts in the Accounting Services Office by cashier's check, money order, or cash payment at least one month before taking the bar examination to ensure the timely release of all necessary bar papers. Cash payment will be necessary from any student requesting immediate clearance. However, students on financial aid who have only a current semester or session balance and will receive additional loan funds to cover the current balance, will be considered as having cleared their accounts with the Accounting Services Office.

Current students intending to transfer or to visit another law school must submit a request for a Letter of Good Standing to the Accounting Services Office, along with the required \$35 transfer application fee **per transfer application**. Cashier's check, money order, or cash payment will be necessary to ensure immediate release of this information. A Letter of Good Standing will be issued only if a student has cleared his or her account with the Accounting Services Office.

Students who are delinquent in their financial obligations are subject to exclusion from classes until payment is made, and a hold will be placed on their account. Further, delinquent balances will be turned over to a collection agency.

FINANCIAL AID

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid administers and processes student loans, scholarships, grants, and Federal Work Study funds. Loan and grant funds are automatically applied to your account. Resulting credit balances due from the college are refunded by electronic refund or check. If your financial aid does not fully cover your tuition and fees, you must, at the time your financial aid is disbursed, pay the remaining balance in full or your account will be subject to the deferred payment deadline with respect to the shortfall.

Counselors are available by appointment to help students with individual financial aid planning. General information about cost of attendance, types of aid, applications processes, and academic requirements related to financial aid is on the [Scholarships and Financial Aid](#) page.

GENERAL POLICIES AND DISCLOSURES

Nondiscrimination Policy

South Texas College of Law Houston adheres to federal and state civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in private institutions of higher education. The law school does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of race, religion, hearing status, personal appearance, color, sex, pregnancy, political affiliation, religion, creed, ethnicity, national origin (including ancestry), citizenship status, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, family responsibilities, predisposing genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, veteran or military status, domestic violence victim status, or any other protected category under applicable local, state, or federal law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any resolution process on campus or within the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or other human rights agencies.

This policy covers nondiscrimination in both employment and access to educational opportunities. Therefore, any member of the law school community whose acts deny, deprive, or limit the educational or employment access, benefits, or opportunities of any member of the law school community, guest, or visitor on the basis of that person's actual or perceived membership in the protected classes listed above is in violation of the South Texas College of Law Houston policy on nondiscrimination.

When brought to the attention of the law school, any such discrimination will be promptly and fairly addressed and remedied by the law school according to the appropriate resolution process as described in the law school's Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination and Non-academic Misconduct Policy and Resolution Process.

Knowledge of Law School Regulations, Curriculum, and Rules

All students are responsible for reviewing the contents of this handbook and complying with all requirements, rules, and regulations herein. Students also are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the content of college communications delivered via official bulletins, student mailboxes, student email, and websites/internet. The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between an applicant, student, or faculty member. The faculty and administration of South Texas College of Law Houston reserve the right to, at any time, make policy changes which may be applicable to students who enrolled before the changes. No exception to, or waiver or deviation from, the provisions of this handbook nor any series of the same (whether granted by the faculty of the college, by one of its committees, or by an official of the college) shall establish a new policy or create a binding precedent or create any right whatsoever of other persons to receive similar exception, waiver, or deviation.

Truthfulness and Disclosure: Prerequisite to Admission and Graduation

Admission of any applicant from matriculation through graduation is contingent upon the truthfulness of information contained in the application materials submitted by the applicant and/or other persons on the applicant's behalf, including letters of recommendation; corrections to any misinformation provided to the law school; and disclosures of information required by the rules or regulations of the law school. Subsequent to application or admission to STCL Houston, each student has a duty to disclose immediately any new incidents and events relating to his/her character and fitness to study and practice law.

Discovery of falsified information or nondisclosure, whether provided directly or indirectly by a student, prior or subsequent to admission, is grounds for withdrawal of an admission offer, immediate dismissal at any point during the course of study, revocation of a J.D. degree if already conferred, or other disciplinary action. Such dismissal will result in forfeiture of all monies paid and academic credits earned. Students should contact the Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs with any questions or amendments related to truthfulness and disclosure.

Representations, Warranties, and Claims

South Texas College of Law Houston does not represent, warrant, or claim that by attending or graduating from the law school an accepted applicant will pass the bar exam or earn acceptance to the bar in any state. In addition, South Texas College of Law Houston does not represent, warrant, or claim that by attending or graduating from the law school, or by subsequently being admitted to the bar of any state, an accepted applicant to the law school will gain employment in a legal position or will receive an average starting salary higher than such applicant might otherwise be in a position to receive.

Logo and Name Usage

Students in the law school, either individually or collectively, shall not, without written consent of the President and Dean, use the name "South Texas College of Law Houston" in connection with any activity of any kind outside the regular work of the college. Violation of this rule may result in disciplinary sanctions. South Texas College of Law Houston trademarks and branding elements, including letterhead, type style and font, cannot be used or recreated for any purpose without the express

written authorization from the law school's Vice President for Marketing and Communications. Authorized student organizations may use the name of the law school, in compliance with the restrictions contained in this section, as long as it reads, "[Name of Student Organization], a student organization at South Texas College of Law Houston."

Alcohol, Drug, Sex Offense, and Harassment Prevention (Title IX)

The Office of Student Academic Affairs provides assistance and referrals for professional services for students who have concerns regarding substance abuse. The office also offers educational programs and screening related to substance abuse, mental health, and stress management. Students should report, via email, sexual offenses or incidents of harassment to the [Title IX Coordinator](#) or click [here](#).

Confidentiality of Official Student Records

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

South Texas College of Law Houston affords all of its students their full rights as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This law protects the privacy of students and provides students the right to inspect and review education records. The College will obtain a written consent from a student before disclosing personally identifiable information from the education records of the student, other than directory information, except as provided in FERPA and the guidelines and procedures adopted to implement FERPA, which are available on the [FERPA](#) page.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCESS

General Complaints

If you have any complaints which you believe need attention by the college, please make an appointment with the Dean or any of the associate deans, or submit a letter setting forth your concerns. A personal or written response will be made as soon as the matter has been investigated. Your suggestions as to a possible solution will be taken into consideration. Anonymous complaints generally are not complete enough to be addressed, as there is no way to obtain additional information to facilitate an investigation. Accordingly, action is seldom taken on anonymous letters.

Academic Appeals

If, after having consulted with the appropriate dean, an academic complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, you may solicit the assistance of the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee, only if the matter falls within its jurisdiction, as follows:

The Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall have the right to grant an appeal, consider and make a determination with respect to the following (*all references are to the Student Handbook*):

1. Impropriety on the part of any professor in assigning a grade or grades based upon anything other than the student's academic performance, including any breach of the policy on "Anonymity;" the "Grading System;" or the making of a post-submission change to a grade in violation of the stated policy.
2. Irregularities or errors in interpreting or implementing any of the following policies:
 - a. The "Academic Deficiency" policy;
 - b. The "Academic Supervision" policy; and
 - c. The "Extracurricular Activities and Academic Deficiency" policy.
3. Deviations in the processing of "Grade Reductions" or in the "Method of Computing Averages."
4. Provided, however, that nothing contained in this statement of jurisdiction shall be construed as a grant of authority to the committee to revise or deviate from any published standard without the prior approval of the faculty. An appeal to the full faculty may be taken by the student in question or any faculty member, if two or more members of the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee dissented from the determination.

Complaints Concerning the Program of Legal Education

South Texas College of Law Houston (the law school) is accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA). The ABA Standards for the Approval of Law Schools can be found on the ABA's website located at https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/standards/. Copies of the ABA Standards are also available in The Fred Parks Law Library.

A. Filing of a Complaint

In accordance with ABA Standard 510, any student who wishes to bring to the law school's attention "a significant problem that directly implicates the school's compliance" with the ABA Standards should submit a complaint to the Associate Dean for Academics. The student's complaint may be sent by email, by fax, or by U.S. Mail. The complaint must be in writing and signed by the student; contain the student's name, home and email addresses, and telephone number; specify the ABA Standard or Standards involved in the complaint; identify the "significant problem that directly implicates the school's compliance" with those Standards; and describe in sufficient detail to permit investigation what action, process, or policy gives rise to the alleged problem and explain how it directly implicates the law school's compliance with the ABA Standards.

B. Procedures for Addressing Complaints

1. The Associate Dean for Academics or his/her designee should acknowledge receiving the student's complaint within three business days of receiving it. Acknowledgment may be made by email, U.S. mail, or by personal delivery.
2. Within two weeks of acknowledging the complaint, the Associate Dean for Academics or his/her designee shall either meet with the complaining student in person or respond to the substance of the complaint in writing. In this meeting or in this writing, the student should receive a substantive response to the complaint or information about what steps are being taken by the law school to address the complaint or what further investigation of the complaint is required for the law school to properly respond to the complaint.
3. If further investigation is required, within two weeks after completion of the investigation the law school shall provide the complainant with either a substantive response to the complaint or information about what steps are being taken by the law school to address the complaint.

C. *Appeal Process*

1. A complainant may appeal the law school's substantive response or statement of proposed remedial steps to the Dean of the law school. The student's appeal must be made in writing within two weeks after communication to the complainant of the substantive response to the complaint.

2. The Dean shall respond to an appeal within three weeks of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Dean will be the final action on the matter.

D. *Maintaining a Written Record of the Complaint*

The law school shall maintain a copy of the complaint and a summary of the process and resolution of the complaint in a confidential manner in the Dean's Office from the date of the final resolution of the complaint through the date of the next ABA site evaluation visit.

E. *Protection Against Retaliation*

The law school will not in any way retaliate against an individual who makes a complaint under this policy and shall not permit any faculty member, administrator, employee, or student to do so.

F. *Deadlines*

For purposes of this policy, "day" means a business day and "week" means a week when the law school is open for normal business, regardless of whether classes are in session. In determining any deadlines set forth in this policy, references to a number of "days" before or after occurrence of an event shall not include the day of the event.

RULES AND POLICIES

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

(effective August 14, 2020)

I. OVERVIEW

A. Preamble

South Texas College of Law Houston (“the law school”) strives to teach students the knowledge, skills, and values needed to practice law and prepare them for their responsibilities as future members of the legal profession. Practicing lawyers are subject to the highest standards of professional conduct. This Student Conduct Code (“the Code”); therefore, presupposes that the law school’s students aspire to join a profession distinguished by honor and integrity and that their character and conduct, while attending the law school, should thus reflect honor and integrity.

As a professional school for lawyers, the law school also expects students to adhere to the highest standards of the profession, including but not limited to honesty, integrity, and professionalism, and to avoid even the appearance of impropriety during their legal education. As a community of respect, the law school further expects its students to be guided by a commitment to treating others with civility, dignity, and respect. These principles and the law school’s aim of preparing students to be members of the legal profession underlie this Code.

B. Purpose and Applicability of Code

1. Purpose of Code

This Code promotes expectations for students’ conduct while they are enrolled at the law school, ensures a fair process for determining compliance with those expectations, and specifies a range of remedial measures for instances where student behavior deviates from these expectations.

2. Applicability of the Code and Student Responsibility

- a) This Code applies to all students of the law school.
- b) Generally, jurisdiction shall extend to conduct that occurs on the law school premises as well as to conduct that occurs off premises if it adversely reflects on the student’s character or fitness to practice law or if the conduct adversely affects the law school or its reputation or purpose, a member of the community-at-large, or a member of the law school community. A student’s off-campus misconduct may be subject to sanctions by the public authorities. In addition, some kinds of off-campus misconduct may violate law school rules or the Code or may otherwise adversely reflect on an individual’s fitness as a law student and prospective member of the legal profession.
- c) Each student shall be responsible for his or her conduct from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree.
- d) Students are responsible for knowing the contents of this Code. Ignorance of the Code will not constitute a defense to disciplinary charges.
- e) This Code shall apply to a student’s conduct even if the student withdraws or is dismissed from the law school while a disciplinary matter is pending, as long as the conduct occurred before the student’s withdrawal or dismissal. If an investigation or hearing under the Code is pending when a student is scheduled to graduate, the student’s degree may be withheld until the charges are resolved; the student may be denied the privilege of participating in graduation programs, receptions, elections, or honors ceremonies at the discretion of the Dean.
- f) Students and student organizations are subject to this Code, but the Code and its processes shall not apply to alleged violations committed by faculty, staff, or law school administration. The Code is intended to govern both academic conduct and some forms of non-academic conduct. Sexual harassment and conduct prohibited under Title IX (34 CFR 106.30) as well as Texas law are addressed in the law school’s Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy.

3. Scope

- a) The Code establishes general standards of acceptable conduct for students within the law school community and describes non-exhaustive examples of both required conduct and prohibited misconduct, but the Code’s failure specifically to address any particular act of misconduct shall not be interpreted to mean that the Code does not apply to such misconduct.
- b) A complaint for violation of this Code may be filed against a student or a student organization for conduct that is also the basis of a civil or criminal action, without regard to any pending civil litigation or criminal arrest and prosecution. Proceedings under the Code may be carried out before, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings. Students who are arrested or otherwise charged with a violation of law or

ordinance outside of the law school have an ongoing obligation to disclose this information, in writing or in person, to the Associate Dean for Students within 15 days of arrest or notice of such charges. This obligation does not include minor traffic violations; yet, it does include any offenses involving alcohol or drugs, any failure to maintain motor vehicle financial responsibility (also known as No Insurance or No Motor Vehicle Liability Insurance), and any offenses in which there was an attempt, whether successful or not, to suspend or revoke a driver's license. Failure to comply with this reporting provision will constitute misconduct under the Code.

A student violates the Code when the student attempts or conspires to violate the Code; the terms "attempt" and "conspires" shall be defined according to the Texas Penal Code for purposes of this provision.

C. *Non-Exclusivity of Code*

This Code describes prohibited and required conduct for the law school's students. It does not replace or modify existing provisions governing student conduct such as [Title IX](#), the Alcohol Service Policy, Drug Abuse Prevention Policy, Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy, and Weapons Policy; these policies, along with the provisions of this Code, apply to student conduct.

D. *Definitions*

These definitions apply to all Code provisions:

1. Community-at-Large includes any person outside of the law school community with whom a law school student comes into contact.
2. The law school community includes any person who is a student, administrator, staff member, coach, faculty member, adjunct faculty member, trustee, or authorized visitor of the College.
3. "Lying" means making a false or misleading statement or providing false or misleading information with knowledge of its falsity or misleading character or with careless disregard as to its truth or accuracy.

II. **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Students shall comply with all requirements and instructions of the administrative authorities and full-time and part-time faculty with regard to academic conduct. Failure to do so is academic misconduct. In addition, students shall not engage in the following forms of academic misconduct: (A) Cheating; (B) Plagiarism; (C) Misconduct Regarding Independent Work; (D) Misconduct Regarding Taking Examinations, (E) Violating Anonymity; (F) Obstructing School Property or the Work of Another, or (G) Other Academic Misconduct.

A. *Cheating*

A student shall not cheat. "Cheating" is any conduct in connection with an examination, paper, article, project, assignment, competition, or the work done for award of academic or professional honors or credit at the law school, done for the purpose of unfairly disadvantaging another student or gaining an unfair advantage. For an act to constitute cheating, it is not necessary that the student obtain the unfair advantage or another student suffer a disadvantage.

B. *Plagiarism*

A student shall not plagiarize. A student plagiarizes when the student submits the work of another as the student's own. Plagiarism is the copying, using identical language or insubstantial variations in language, of the work, words, or ideas of another without fully and accurately crediting sources, the improper paraphrasing of the work of another as explained below, or the use of ideas or text obtained from another without fully and accurately crediting sources. Fully crediting sources means referring to sources by footnotes or citations, in addition to indicating, by the use of quotation marks, language taken directly from the source. Proper paraphrasing means restating the text in a different form that maintains the text's meaning, not merely rearranging the same text. Citation of a source is not a defense to a charge of plagiarism.

C. *Misconduct Regarding Independent Work*

1. A student who puts his/her name or examination number on any work submitted for academic credit, publication, or presentation, by doing so, will have certified that resources have been fully credited and that the student has not received unauthorized aid with that work.
2. A student shall not permit his/her own work, or any portion of his/her own work, to be submitted as the work of another.
3. A student shall not offer any work for a course that the student previously prepared for another purpose (such as for another course, for a journal, or for professional work or an internship), except on receipt of written permission from the faculty member to whom the work is offered after full student disclosure.
4. A student shall not invade the security maintained for the preparation and storage of examinations. Regardless of how the student attains the information, if a student learns information concerning an examination that he/she is due to take, other than that released or authorized by a faculty member, the student shall notify the faculty member giving the exam immediately upon learning the information.
5. A student shall adhere to all non-collaboration requirements of a faculty member or administrator with regard to the student's work, whether an examination, paper, or any other project or assignment.

D. *Misconduct Regarding Taking Examinations*

1. A student shall not take an examination for another or permit another to take an examination for him/her.
2. While taking an examination, a student shall neither possess nor refer to any material (such as books, notebooks, outlines, papers, or notes, no matter whether written or through technology) not authorized by the faculty member for use in the examination.
3. While taking an examination, a student shall not give, receive, or obtain information or assistance in any form not authorized by the faculty member or person(s) administering the examination.
4. During an examination, a student shall neither converse nor communicate with any person other than the person(s) administering the examination, unless with the permission of the person(s) administering the examination.
5. A student shall not begin an examination before the time announced for beginning the examination by the person(s) administering the examination.
6. A student shall not continue writing after the time announced for the conclusion of the examination by the person(s) administering the examination.
7. A student shall not fail to submit a set of answers, the examination, or such other materials as are requested at the conclusion of the examination by the person(s) administering the examination.
8. A student who has permission to take a make-up examination shall not discuss the contents of the examination with anyone other than the professor giving the examination until after the student has taken the make-up examination.
9. A student shall not knowingly communicate, directly or indirectly, the contents of an examination to any student who has not yet taken the examination.
10. A student shall not knowingly misrepresent an illness or any other reason for the purpose of deferring or being excused from an examination.
11. A student shall comply with all requirements governing student conduct set out in the law school's Final Examination Procedures.

E. *Violating Anonymity or Faculty Instructions*

1. A student shall not violate any faculty or administrative rules or instructions regarding the anonymity of examinations, papers, or other assignments.
2. A student shall not take an examination, submit a paper, or perform any other academic work in violation of the instructions given by the faculty member for whom the student performs the work.

F. *Conduct Affecting School Property or the Work of Another*

1. A student shall not tear, mutilate, destroy, hide, misfile, or remove library materials from the library without complying with library procedures.
2. A student shall not use any law school computer or printer or other technology or database owned by the law school for any purpose other than education in accordance with library procedures and the law school's mission.
3. A student shall not tear, mutilate, destroy, hide, gain access to, share with others, misfile, or remove property of another member of the law school community without the property owner's express permission.
4. A student shall not take any action for the purpose of impeding another student's work involving an examination, competition, paper, project, assignment, article, or other academic work.

G. *Other Academic Misconduct*

1. A student shall not knowingly make a false allegation of a violation of this Code.
2. A student shall not knowingly misrepresent his/her academic record, extracurricular activities, or work experience to other institutions, prospective employers (whether paid or for an unpaid internship), court, judge, or law school organizations.

3. A student shall not lie with regard to any questions asked of him or her by any faculty member or administrator of the law school regarding an alleged violation of this Code.
4. A student lying about academic work shall violate this Code.
5. A student shall not make a false declaration on any attendance document; a false declaration would include signing in another student who is not present in class.

III. NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Students shall comply with all requirements and instructions of the administrative authorities and full-time and part-time faculty for maintenance of order and decorum on the law school premises, including but not limited to in classrooms, courtrooms, clinics, the library, study rooms, hallways, and all other facilities and property of the law school. Students shall not engage in behavior that jeopardizes the health or safety of the law school community or anyone in the law school community or community-at-large or disrupts the educational activities and supporting services of the law school.

To that end, students shall not engage in the following instances of non-academic misconduct: (A) harassment, physical assault, stalking, bullying, or intimidation, as described here and in the law school's Title IX policy; (B) misuse of the law school's property or other students' property; (C) violations of the law school's policies regarding use and consumption of drugs and alcohol; (D) use and carrying of weapons; (E) off-campus misconduct; and (F) misconduct regarding the Code's disciplinary process.

A. *Harassment, Physical Assault, Stalking, Bullying, Intimidation*

In addition to the misconduct described in the law school's "[Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination and Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#)", a student will violate this Code by engaging in any conduct for the purpose of, or which has the reasonably foreseeable effect of, limiting the ability of any member of the law school community to fully participate in or benefit from any activities of the law school. A student also violates this Code by engaging in conduct that will risk or diminish the health and safety of any member of the law school community or community-at-large. The prohibitions against harassment, bullying, and intimidation do not apply to views or opinions expressed in the classroom that are relevant to the subject being taught and are expressed in a responsible and professional manner. With these prohibitions in mind, the following non-academic misconduct, though not an exhaustive list, violates the Code:

1. A student shall not engage in physical assault, acts of physical violence, injury to the property of others, conduct that intentionally or recklessly imperils the safety of any person on law school premises or threaten to commit any of the above.
2. A student shall not engage in threats, harassment, stalking, bullying, or intimidation by speech, written word, or conduct, including by use of social media, text, or e-mail, that is directed toward or that is about a student, a group of students, administrative authorities, coaches, staff, or full-time or part-time faculty members.
3. While at the law school, a student shall not behave in a manner that impedes, impairs, interferes with, or disrupts any teaching, practice, clinic, meeting, library activity, research, administrative services, or law school activity.

B. *Misuse of Property*

A student will violate this Code by engaging in any conduct that disrupts the law school's normal operations or damages, in any way, the law school's facilities or property or the property of any member of the law school community. To that end, the following conduct, though not an exhaustive list, will constitute a violation of the Code:

1. A student shall not damage, deface, tamper with, gain access to, share with others, or take without authorization law school property or the property of any member of law school community, which includes, but is not limited to, all furniture, computers, technology owned by the law school, books, and safety devices (fire extinguishers and defibrillators), any database owned by the law school, or personal information of someone other than the student on a law school or personal computer or computerized database.
2. A student shall not gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to, entry into, or use of any buildings or facilities of the law school.

C. *Alcohol and Illegal Drugs*

A student violates this Code by engaging in conduct involving alcohol or illegal drugs that will risk or diminish the health and safety of any member of the law school community or community-at-large. With this prohibition in mind, and in addition to the Alcohol Service Policy (see the Student Handbook), Drug Abuse Prevention Policy (see the Student Handbook), and Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy (see the Student Handbook), the following conduct shall violate the Student Conduct Code:

1. A student shall not engage in unlawful manufacture, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs while on law school property, while in a classroom at the law school, while representing the law school, or while participating in law school activities on or off law school property.

2. A student shall not consume, possess, or use alcohol or illegal drugs while on law school property, except for alcohol consumption during law school sanctioned, sponsored, or related activities in accordance with the law school's Alcohol Service Policy.
3. A student shall not attend a law school or law school-sponsored class, clinic, competition, conference, seminar, or other educational activity (or represent the law school at any such event) under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

D. Firearms and Weapons Misconduct

1. A student who engages in conduct that violates the law school's Weapons Policy (see the Student Handbook) violates the Code by that conduct and will be disciplined under the procedures at Section V of the Code.

E. Off-Campus Misconduct

1. A student who engages in conduct not otherwise covered by a Code provision, whether on or off law school premises, which adversely reflects on the student's character or fitness to practice law or adversely affects the law school, its reputation, or any member of the law school community or the community-at-large commits a violation of this Code.

F. Misconduct Regarding the Code's Disciplinary Process

1. A student who in good faith suspects a Code violation has occurred has an obligation to promptly report the suspected violation to a member of the faculty or administrator. A student's failure to do so violates the Code.
2. A student violates the Code by falsely accusing another student of a violation when the accuser knows the accusation is false.

IV. MISCONDUCT ON APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

The following conduct, if committed by an applicant to the law school, and not discovered or disclosed until after the applicant's matriculation as a student at the law school, violates the Code. The disciplinary procedure for an applicant's violation of this section, even after the applicant has matriculated, will be handled by the law school's Admissions Office alongside the Office of Student Academic Affairs as reflected in the Truthfulness and Disclosure section of the Student Handbook.

- A. A student shall not forge, falsify, or alter documents or records submitted in connection with the student's application for admission to the law school.
- B. A student shall not submit false information in response to questions on the student's law school application or questions from admissions officers in connection with the student's law school application.
- C. A student shall not fail to provide information or correct incorrect information once the student learns of new or changed information relevant to an admissions inquiry on the student's law school application.

V. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

A. Reporting Requirement

Any person having knowledge of facts he or she believes constitute academic misconduct under the Code shall report such facts in writing to the Associate Dean for Students. The report shall be signed with the full name of the person submitting the report and shall name the student(s) whom the reporting person believes violated the Code. Lying in the reporting of alleged misconduct will violate the Code. Any person having knowledge of fact he or she believes constitute violations of the law school policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination or Non-Academic Misconduct should make a report online at or contact the Title IX Coordinator.

B. Review of the Complaint

Upon receipt of a report of academic misconduct, the Associate Dean for Students shall review the report and may review any other materials or make inquiry of any person believed to have information concerning the report. If, as a result of such review and inquiry, and upon finding good reason to proceed, the Associate Dean for Students shall issue a complaint ("Complaint") and refer such Complaint to the Student Appeals and Discipline Committee ("Committee") constituted as set forth in Section C below, which shall hear and determine the matter.

Lying to the Associate Dean for Students in responding to his or her inquiry for information regarding alleged misconduct will violate the Code.

If the Associate Dean for Students (with approval of the Dean) finds there is no good reason to proceed, then no further action shall be taken on the report.

C. Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee to Hear the Complaint

If the Associate Dean for Students finds there is good reason to proceed on the report and issues a Complaint against a student, the matter shall be referred to the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee ("Committee"), consisting of at least three regular full-time faculty members and two students, to hear the report. One of the appointed faculty members shall serve as the Committee's chairperson. The Dean shall appoint the student members of the Committee in consultation with the President of the Student Bar Association. Each student on the Committee shall be in good academic standing and shall have expressed a willingness to serve on the Committee. The Committee shall determine

whether the student or students in the Complaint have committed a violation, and if the committee finds that the student(s) have done so, it shall determine the sanction to be imposed, except as otherwise provided in Section J below.

D. Rights of the Student(s) Named in Complaint

The Committee may find the student(s) to have a violation of this Code only after affording the student each of the following rights, except those rights specifically and knowingly waived by the student in writing:

1. Notice of the specific conduct or action(s) alleged to constitute a violation by the student and notice of rights (2) through (6) immediately below, at least seven days before the commencement of a fact-finding hearing.
2. The opportunity at the hearing to hear all evidence against the student.
3. The opportunity at the hearing to present relevant evidence in the student's behalf.
4. The right to remain silent at all points in the proceeding.
5. The right to retain counsel at the student's own expense and to have counsel appear with the student in the proceedings, or, in lieu of counsel, to have any other individual willing to do so, in either case, at no cost to the law school, appear with the student in the proceedings; provided that no person, other than the members of the committee, shall have the right to be present while the committee, after examining the evidence, is deliberating over the question of whether the student has committed a violation of the Code and/or the question of what sanction(s) to impose ("Deliberative Session"). The sole function of such counsel (or other individual) shall be (i) to be present (except as otherwise provided above), (ii) to give advice to the student concerning what he/she should or should not say, and (iii) to summarize the case for the student in a closing statement addressing the issue of whether a violation of the Code has been committed by the student and/or the issue of what an appropriate sanction should be if a violation is found or has been admitted to have been committed.
6. The right to defer for no longer than one hour any statement the student wishes to make at any point until subject student has consulted with the person, if any, representing the student.

The Committee's finding that a student has or has not committed a violation shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

If after hearing the evidence (including the answers to any questions asked by a member of the Committee) the Committee consequently finds subject student to have committed a violation, it shall provide the student with a concise statement of its conclusions. Such statement (without identifying the name of the student) may, at the Dean's discretion, be provided to the whole faculty and published appropriately to the student *body*.

E. Hearing

The Committee shall call and question such persons and examine whatever other evidence it considers relevant to the issues to be determined. Only members of the Committee may question persons appearing before it. The Committee shall record the hearing on the Complaint, except when the Committee is in deliberative session. The committee may, in its discretion, grant immunity to any witness from any sanction which might be imposed in connection with the incident described in the Complaint. Evidence of a prior complaint against the student shall be admissible before the Committee, unless it did not result in a sanction which remains a part of the student's permanent college record.

F. Standard of Proof; Determination of a Violation by the Student(s)

If the Committee finds the student has not committed the violation(s) set forth in the Complaint, then the fact that such finding has been made shall be reported to the Dean. If a majority of the Committee finds that the student has committed a violation by a preponderance of the evidence, then the committee shall impose whatever sanction a majority of the Committee believes is appropriate; however, the student shall not be suspended for more than one semester or expelled from the law school except with the concurrence of a majority of the voting faculty who are present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present following at least seven days' notice. If the Committee finds the student to have committed a violation, the chairperson shall report in writing such finding and the sanction recommended to the Dean of the law school for approval or modification. If the Dean approves suspension for more than one semester or expulsion, this sanction will be imposed only with faculty concurrence.

G. Closed Proceedings

All proceedings under the Code shall be closed to persons not participating in the proceedings.

H. Retention of Records; Release

Unless a record of a sanction imposed in the proceedings becomes and remains a part of the student's permanent law school record, no information about the Complaint or the proceedings thereon shall, without the consent of the student named in the Complaint, be disclosed to any person, other than the student named in the Complaint, for any purpose, except the internal operations of the law school, and except:

1. In response to an order or inquiry from any court or administrative agency having authority to issue such order or inquiry and issued to law school or to any employee of the law school in his/her official capacity; or
2. In any judicial, administrative, or other legal proceedings where such information would be relevant reasonably necessary to defend the interests of the law school or any employee of the law school in his/her official capacity; or
3. In response to a request concerning the outcome of the proceeding received from a person who participated in the proceeding.

J. Summary Procedure

A student may admit that he/she has committed a violation of the Code and request that the Associate Dean for Students impose sanctions. In such event, the Associate Dean for Students may impose any sanction provided for in Section J below, except Suspension for Longer than One Semester and Expulsion. The student's consent to this Summary Procedure shall be deemed also to include consent that the results may be published but without identifying the student.

K. Sanction Options

1. The Committee shall have authority to impose one or more of the following sanctions against a student who has committed a Code violation ("respondent"), subject to V(F):
 - a) Private Oral Reprimand, which shall consist of notification to the student of a finding that he or she has committed a violation of this Code. The record of such sanction shall not become part of the respondent's permanent law school record and need not be reported to the Texas Board of Law Examiners or other state board of bar admissions.
 - b) Private Conditional Oral Reprimand, which shall consist of notification to the respondent of a finding that he or she has committed a violation of this Code and the imposition of such conditions as the Committee shall determine. A record of such sanction shall not become a part of the respondent's permanent law school record, unless the respondent fails to comply with the conditions imposed by the Committee. Upon respondent's failure to satisfy any condition imposed by the Committee within any specified time limits, the record of such reprimand will become a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
 - c) Written Reprimand, which shall consist of a written communication to the respondent from the Dean that the respondent has been found to have violated the provisions of this Code, a record of which reprimand shall become a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
 - d) Disciplinary Probation, upon whatever conditions, with whatever consequence from breach of conditions, and for whatever duration the Committee may determine is appropriate, a record of which probation shall become a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
 - e) One-Semester Suspension, which shall consist of the respondent being separated from the law school for one semester (without regard to the requirement that law studies be completed within 84 months from their commencement). A record of such suspension shall be made a part of the student's permanent law school record.
2. The Committee may recommend the following sanctions, subject to V(F):
 - a) Suspension for Longer than One Semester, which shall consist of the respondent being separated from the law school for whatever period of time longer than a single semester which the Committee may determine is appropriate (without regard to the requirement that law studies be completed within 84 months from their commencement) and subject to whatever conditions the Committee may impose to be satisfied before the respondent is permitted to resume his or her legal studies at the law school. A record of such suspension shall be made a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
 - b) Expulsion, which shall consist of the respondent's dismissal from the law school without a right to readmission, thereby permanently terminating the respondent's studies at the law school. A record of such expulsion shall be made a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
3. Supplemental Sanctions. In connection with the imposition of any of the sanctions described above, the Committee also may impose the following sanctions:
 - a) Failure of Course. The student may receive an "F" in any course with respect to which the Committee finds the student engaged in Academic Misconduct, whether grades for that course have been submitted by the faculty member before the violation became known.
 - b) Letter of Apology. The student may be required to write a letter of apology or explanation of conduct to any person adversely affected by the misconduct.
 - c) Loss of Privileges. The student may be denied certain privileges of being a student at the law school for a designated period of time.
 - d) Restitution. The student may be required to make financial restitution to any persons injured by his or her conduct.
 - e) Additional Credit Hours. The student may be required, as a condition of graduation from the law school or to be certified as eligible to take any bar examination, successfully to complete up to an additional ten hours of academic credit.
4. Report to Board of Bar Admissions. Any record of sanction that is made a part of the student's permanent law school record must be reported to the Texas Board of Law Examiners or other appropriate state board of bar admissions, but no such report need be made for any sanction that is not made a part of the student's permanent law school record.
5. In determining any sanction under these procedures, those imposing discipline may consider mitigating and aggravating factors, including but not limited to the following: (1) conscientious admissions by the student wherein the student voluntarily admits misconduct before any complaint is made; (2) oral admissions after a complaint is

made; (3) cooperation by the alleged wrongdoer; (4) the intent of the alleged wrongdoer; (5) degree of harm; (6) seriousness of offense; (7) willingness to make restitution; (8) discriminatory motive; and (9) nexus of offense to professional standards.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON ALCOHOL SERVICE POLICY

(Adopted July 1, 2005)

I. Purpose of Policy

South Texas College of Law Houston desires to maintain a safe and self-disciplined law school environment that is conducive to learning and critical to achieving high standards for law students and for the legal profession. The college further desires events be enjoyable and conducted in a comfortable environment for all participants, but that they not in any way detract from or impair the college's mission as a serious institution of higher education. To this end, the college permits the consumption of alcohol under the following policy, and in accordance with Texas State laws and the City of Houston ordinances and regulations.

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all officers, faculty and staff (*to include employee personal use*), and students (*to include student organizations or other student groups*). In addition, this policy will apply to external organizations who utilize the facilities of South Texas College of Law Houston, special guests of the college, and all visitors to the college. The term "the college" when used to identify a location includes the college's buildings and parking lots.

III. Policy Specifics

A. On-Campus Events

1. No alcoholic beverages other than beer, champagne, and/or wine may be served on the college's property at any event.
2. The college's security staff must be present at all functions where alcohol is served. Security shall have the authority to terminate any function where violations of this policy or serious problems are evident.
3. When service of alcoholic beverages is planned for any event on the college's property, the sponsor of the event must submit to the Security Department, at least ten business days before such event, a fully completed, executed, and approved Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator form(s) designating a college employee (*for college events or employee personal use of the facilities*), an officer of the sponsoring organization (*in the case of student events*), or an officer of an organization (*in the case of external organizations utilizing the college's facilities*).
 - a. Failure to submit the Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator form(s) within ten business days before such event shall be grounds for suspension of the privilege to serve alcohol at the event
 - b. Based on the number of expected participants of an event, multiple event facilitators may be required as determined by the Security Department.
4. Service of alcoholic beverages at any event on the college's property must be limited to three hours, and no charge for alcoholic beverages may be made. In addition, service of alcoholic beverages must cease at least thirty minutes before the end of the event.
5. With the exception of the student organizations' semester beer parties in which beer is supplied from kegs, the duties of serving alcohol shall be restricted to professional bartenders supplied by a catering company and in no case shall employees of the college be allowed to serve alcoholic beverages.
6. At all events on the college's property where alcoholic beverages are served, an ample supply and variety of non-alcoholic beverages must also be provided, as well as a sufficient amount of food in quantities proportionate to the number of participants.
7. Publicity for student events where alcoholic beverages are to be served must comply with the publicity policy for college events which requires among other things, that no reference to service of alcoholic beverages of any kind may be made.
8. The college reserves the right at any time to limit the amount of alcohol served at any event.
9. The college reserves the right to prevent individuals who appear intoxicated from entering or leaving the college, including exiting from the building to the parking lots.
10. The Event Facilitator must agree to comply with this policy and all rules set forth in the Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator form.
11. The sponsor of the event is responsible for the pick-up and/or removal of the original retail or wholesale containers from the college within twenty-four hours following the end of the event, or on the next business day.
12. Consumption and service of alcohol will be restricted to the site of that particular event; and under no circumstances shall anyone exit the premises with open containers.
13. All events will be operated in accordance with fire codes in that the number in attendance must not exceed legal occupancy capacity.

14. Anyone consuming alcohol must comply with this policy, the rules set forth in the Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator form, and all other college policies including, but not limited to, the Building Use Policy.
15. Violators of this policy or the rules set forth in the Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator form will be subject to disciplinary action to include suspension of privileges to use the college's facilities, suspension of privileges to consume alcohol at future events, and other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by college authorities.

Exceptions to the policy regarding on-campus consumption of alcohol shall be as follows:

1. Students and their friends and/or family members shall be allowed to bring beer, champagne and/or wine into the front foyer of the college for traditional celebratory purposes upon conclusion of a graduating student's final examinations.
 2. All activities pursuant to this exception shall be limited to the Liberty Bell area.
 3. Under no circumstances shall any individual be allowed to leave the college with an open container(s) of an alcoholic beverage.
 4. Security shall have the authority to terminate any consumption of alcoholic beverages in the college's foyer if students and/or their guests become uncooperative or violate this policy.
- B. Off-Campus Events*
1. Events held off-campus are not subject to the above policy; however, groups serving alcoholic beverages at events held off-campus are strongly encouraged to:
 - a. limit the duration of alcohol service,
 - b. serve an ample supply and variety of non-alcoholic beverages, as well as a sufficient amount of food in quantities proportionate to the number of participants,
 - c. designate an individual who will not consume alcohol at the event to monitor the activity and assist anyone who appears to be intoxicated, and
 - d. hire an appropriate number of law enforcement officers as a safety precaution.
- C. Policy Exceptions*
1. No exceptions to this policy shall be made for student events.
 2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1 above, upon written request, only the President and Dean, or his designee, shall have the authority to grant exceptions to this policy (*Policy No. 4-2, Revision No. 3*).

Note: You must obtain a copy of the following form from the Student Organizations Office or from the Property Management Office. The form must be signed by the appropriate administrative officer of the college and approved by the Director of Security.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON CONSENT TO SERVE AS EVENT FACILITATOR

Event: _____
 Name of sponsor: _____
 Date of event: _____
 Location of event: _____
 Time of event: Start _____ am/pm End _____ am/pm
 Number expected to participate: _____

Service of alcoholic beverages will be limited to three hours. In addition, service of alcoholic beverages must cease at least thirty minutes before the end of the event.

The Event Facilitator agrees to comply with the Alcohol Service Policy and the responsibilities set forth below and report any violations regarding policies governing alcohol, drugs, sex offenses, facility usage, etc., to Security.

1. The Event Facilitator must be a current student or full-time employee of South Texas College of Law Houston and, if a student, also an officer of the sponsoring organization. In the case of external organizations utilizing the college's facilities, the Event Facilitator must be an officer of the organization.
2. The Event Facilitator must be in attendance for the entire event and for the entire duration of alcohol service.
3. The Event Facilitator is responsible for ensuring that the service and consumption of alcohol is limited to three hours, and that service and consumption ceases at least thirty minutes before the end of the event.
4. The Event Facilitator must ensure that all alcohol is secured and not accessible by any guest(s) when it is time for service and consumption to cease.
5. The Event Facilitator is responsible for ensuring that the premises are vacated by the event end time referenced above.
6. The Event Facilitator acknowledges and agrees, by signature below, that the law enforcement officer has the authority to terminate the event in accordance with the Alcohol Service Policy, and at the end time referenced above should the Event Facilitator fail to carry out that responsibility.
7. The Event Facilitator must introduce him/herself to the on-site law enforcement officer assigned to the event.
8. The Event Facilitator may not consume alcohol during the event.
9. The Event Facilitator must immediately notify the on-site law enforcement officer regarding any misconduct, violations of the Alcohol Service Policy and any other policy.
10. The Event Facilitator must assist the law enforcement officer as he/she carries out his/her duties, and must cooperate with any subsequent college investigations.
11. The Event Facilitator cannot delegate his/her responsibilities.
12. The Event Facilitator must ensure that anyone appearing intoxicated is no longer served alcohol and does not attempt to drive.

Violators of the Alcohol Service Policy or the rules set forth above will be subject to disciplinary action to include suspension of privileges to use the college's facilities, suspension of privileges to consume alcohol at future events, and other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by college authorities

 Event Facilitator (print) Even Facilitator (signature)

 Position Date

Approvals:

 Director of Security Date

 Appropriate Dean, Associate Dean, Date
 Vice President, Assistant Dean,
 Faculty member, or department head

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON POLICY FOR HOSTING AND PUBLICIZING COLLEGE EVENTS

If a special event, seminar or reception is held at South Texas College of Law Houston, the sponsor must submit a fully completed and executed room reservation form to Synermark Properties of Texas Ltd., Inc., in a timely manner. If alcohol is to be served at any event on the college's property, full compliance with the Alcohol Service Policy is required. That policy requires, among other things, that the sponsor submit to the Student Organizations Office a fully completed and executed Consent to Serve as Event Facilitator. All forms satisfying the above requirements are available through the Synermark Properties of Texas Ltd., Inc., office (Suite 201C) and the Student Organizations Office (Room 120C).

Signs

All signs for student-hosted events must be approved by the Student Organizations Office. Signs must show the sponsor, date, time, location and purpose or description of the event. All other information is optional. No reference to service of alcoholic beverages of any kind may be made under any circumstances.

Letter-sized paper signs (8½" x 11") must be stamped with approval and dated by the Student Organizations Office (Room 101C). Approved signs may be placed on the bulletin boards located on the second through eighth floor corridors by the tower elevators. No copies of such signs may be displayed anywhere other than in the above-mentioned locations.

Digital signs should contain the same information as paper signs and will be designed and posted to the digital monitors located in the student lounge and near the security desk. To have a digital sign produced for your event, please inquire in the Student Organizations Office (Room 101C) for assistance.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Drug Use on Campus Prohibited

1. "Illegal drugs" shall be defined as a substance or substances defined and regulated under the provisions of Article 4476-14 or Article 4476-15 of Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes, except as may be allowed by these provisions and includes, but is not limited to, Central Nervous System ("CNS") depressants, CNS stimulants, hallucinogens and other illegal drugs such as PCP (angel dust).
2. "Use" of a drug shall include use, possession, manufacture, sale or distribution on campus of any one or more illegal drugs.
3. "On Campus" shall mean any building, facility, grounds or other property owned, leased or controlled by South Texas College of Law Houston.
4. "Drug Officer" shall mean the person charged by the Dean (Gena Singleton, ext. 1778, 809T) with the responsibility to oversee and coordinate campus disciplinary procedures. Unless personal action by the Drug Officer is expressly required, the term shall mean "Drug Officer or his/her designee."
5. The use of illegal drugs on campus is contrary to the policy of the college and is hereby prohibited.
6. Any person violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, conducted in accordance with the college's "Procedures for Use in Illegal Drug Cases."
7. Any person observing the use of illegal drugs on campus should report same to the drug officer or the Dean's office.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON PROCEDURES FOR USE IN ILLEGAL DRUG CASES

(Adopted March 18, 1988)

I. Definitions

1. "Illegal drugs" shall be defined as a substance or substances defined and regulated under the provisions of Article 4476-14 or Article 4476-15 of Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes, except as may be allowed by these provisions and includes, but is not limited to, Central Nervous System ("CNS") depressants, CNS stimulant, hallucinogens and other illegal drugs such as PCP (angel dust).
2. "Use" of a drug shall include use, possession, manufacture, sale or distribution on the campus of any one or more illegal drugs.
3. "Drug Officer" shall mean the person charged by the Dean, currently, Gena Singleton, ext. 1778, 809T, with the responsibility to oversee and coordinate campus disciplinary procedures. Unless personal action by the Drug Officer is expressly required, the term shall mean "Drug Officer or his/her designee." During any times that there is no Drug Officer appointed, the term shall mean the Dean or his/her designee.
4. "On Campus" shall mean any building, facility, grounds or other property owned, leased or controlled by South Texas College of Law Houston.
5. "Penalty" shall mean the sanction imposed for violating the policy. The sanction imposed for violating the policy may be suspension of the offending student for such period of time as may be determined by the Drug Officer or Hearing

Committee or Hearing Officer, as the case may be. The sanction shall not be carried out until it has been approved by the Dean.

6. "The Hearing Committee" is a fair and impartial committee/officer appointed by the Dean in his/her discretion to hear a particular case.
7. "Policy" shall be defined as the institution's policy found in the Academic Regulations, which prohibits the use of illegal drugs on campus by students.

II. Complaint Filed

Any person having knowledge of use of illegal drugs on campus should report the usage to the Drug Officer.

III. Investigation, Summons and Interview

The Drug Officer or his/her designee shall determine if there are reasonable grounds to believe there was a violation of the policy. If the Drug Officer or his/her designee believes there is a violation of the policy, he/she shall summon the student and discuss the charges and evidence with the student and give the student the opportunity to respond. If the Drug Officer or his/her designee still believes there is violation of the policy, he/she shall initiate disciplinary action. The student is entitled to choose either to accept a process through the Drug Officer or may request a formal hearing.

IV. Interim Action

Where it is determined by the Drug Officer or his/her designee that the student's continuing presence poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the Drug Officer or his/her designee may take immediate interim disciplinary action including suspension. No such action may be taken until the Drug Officer or his/her designee discusses or attempts to discuss the case with the student. If interim action is taken, a hearing or other process shall be scheduled as soon as possible thereafter.

V. Formal Hearing

A student may request a formal hearing to the Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer within a period of time not exceeding ten days. This request shall be in writing.

VI. Procedures Before the Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer

The Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer shall abide by the following procedures:

1. The Drug Officer shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable period of time not exceeding thirty days after a request therefor is filed. The Drug Officer shall notify the student in writing of the time, date and place of the hearing.
2. The college shall be represented by the Drug Officer or his/her designee.
3. The Drug Officer shall provide to the student a list of witnesses, documentary evidence and brief summary of the proposed testimony of the witnesses within a reasonable time before the hearing. The Drug Officer may require the student to provide the same type of information to the Drug Officer within a reasonable time before the hearing.
4. Not less than twenty days before the hearing, the student may file with the Dean a writing challenging for good cause shown the impartiality of the Hearing Committee members or Officer. The Dean shall act on any such challenge and shall appoint an impartial replacement for any person against whom the challenge is sustained.
5. Each party shall have an opportunity to present orally or in writing its own version of the facts and to present other evidence in support of its case.
6. Each party shall have the right to hear the evidence and ask questions of the witnesses either directly or through the Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer.
7. The Chairman of the Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer shall preside over the hearing and rule on all evidentiary and procedural matters.
8. The student may be counselled by an advisor including an attorney during the hearing. However, an advisor/attorney shall not be allowed to participate in the hearing process other than to advise the student unless the college uses an attorney other than the Drug Officer to present its case.
9. The college has the burden of proving its cases by the preponderance of evidence. The preponderance of evidence means proof that leads a reasonable person to find that the facts in issue are more likely to have occurred than not.
10. Either party at its own expense may make a record of the proceedings by use of a tape recorder, court reporter, written summaries of the proceedings or other reliable means of making a record.
11. After hearing all the evidence, the committee shall determine by majority vote of those present or, if a Hearing Officer is used in lieu of a committee, the Hearing Officer shall determine if the student violated the policy. If it is found the student violated the policy, the committee shall recommend to the Dean an appropriate penalty.
12. Student hearings shall be closed to the public.
13. Any determination that the policy has been violated shall be based only on the evidence presented at the hearings.

VIII. Appeal from Hearing Committee/Hearing Officer

The decision at the hearing stage shall be final, subject to the last sentence of Paragraph 5 of Section I above. (March 18, 1988)

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON ILLEGAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, Public Law 101-226, require that South Texas College of Law Houston, an institution of higher education, certify that it has adopted and implemented, and will administer in good faith, a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol, the misuse of prescription drugs, and the abuse of alcohol by students and employees. This certification is a condition of receiving funds, grants or any other form of financial assistance under any federal program, including all federally funded student financial aid.

Standards of Conduct

Students and employees (*faculty, staff or any other individual receiving a salary, wage, or other compensation*) of South Texas College of Law Houston are expected to abide by local, state and federal laws relating to the use of alcohol and other drugs. The college prohibits the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol, the misuse of prescription drugs and the abuse of alcohol by students and employees while on college property, or while representing the college, or while participating in college activities whether on or off college property.

Authorized Use of Prescribed Medicine

Students or employees undergoing prescribed medical treatment with any drug or controlled substance which interferes with student or work activity must report such treatment to the Director of Human Resources (Steve Alderman, ext. 1814, 803T), and the immediate supervisor in the case of staff employees. Prescribed medicine should be kept in its original container, which identifies the drug, date of prescription, prescribing doctor, and the person for whom the drug is prescribed.

College Disciplinary Sanctions

Compliance with the South Texas College of Law Houston Illegal Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy is a condition of student enrollment and faculty and staff employment.

Any student or employee of South Texas College of Law Houston found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination of employment and referral for prosecution. Appropriate action may also include requiring the student or employee to satisfactorily complete a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program.

Further, employees must notify the Director of Human Resources or the President and Dean of the college of any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off college premises while conducting college business, or while representing the college, no later than five days after such conviction.

Legal Sanctions

Both federal and state law make it a criminal offense to manufacture, distribute, dispense or simply possess an illegal drug. State laws also contain penalties for the abuse or misuse of alcoholic beverages. Both sets of laws carry penalties for violations, which could include community service, monetary fines and imprisonment.

State Penalties and Sanctions Concerning Drugs

The statutes in Texas which regulate an individual's involvement with drugs are the Dangerous Drug Act (Tex. Health and Safety Code Ann. Title 6, Chapter 483) and the Controlled Substance Act (Tex. Health and Safety Code Ann. Title 6, Chapter 481). Penalties for convictions under these statutes range from probation to life in prison and fines escalating to \$1,000,000. These penalties are determined by individual circumstances, the category or type of drug involved, and whether one is a repeat offender.

Federal Penalties and Sanctions for Illegal Possession of a Controlled Substance

21 U.S.C. 844(a)

First Conviction: Up to one year imprisonment and fined a minimum of \$1,000 or both.

After one prior drug conviction: Not less than 15 days in prison, but not more than two years, and fined a minimum of \$2,500 or both.

After two or more prior drug convictions: Not less than 90 days in prison, not to exceed three years, and fined a minimum of \$5,000 or both.

Special sentencing provisions for possession of crack cocaine: Mandatory not less than five years in prison, not to exceed 20 years and fined a minimum of \$1,000 or both if:

- a. First conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds 5 grams.
- b. Second crack conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds 3 grams.

- c. Third or subsequent crack conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds 1 gram.

21 U.S.C. 853(a)(2) and 881(a)(7)

Forfeiture of personal and real property used to commit or to facilitate possession of a controlled substance, if that offense is punishable by more than one year imprisonment. (*See special sentencing provisions, above, regarding crack.*)

21 U.S.C. 862

Denial of federal benefits, such as student loans, grants, contracts and professional and commercial licenses, up to one year for first offense, up to five years for second and subsequent offenses.

21 U.S.C. 881(a)(4)

Forfeiture of all conveyances, including vehicles, boats, aircraft which are used (or are intended for use) to transport, or in any manner to facilitate the transportation, sale, receipt, possession, or concealment of a controlled substance.

18 U.S.C. 922(G)

Ineligible to receive or purchase a firearm.

Miscellaneous

Revocation of certain federal licenses and benefits, *e.g.* pilot licenses, public housing tenancy, etc., are vested within the authorities of individual federal agencies.

State Laws and Penalties Regarding Alcohol Abuse

From Vernon's Annotated Texas Penal Code:

Sec 49.02, Public Intoxication, Class C misdemeanor carrying a fine not to exceed \$500.

Sec 49.03, Consumption of Alcohol While Driving, Class C misdemeanor carrying a fine not to exceed \$500.

Sec 49.04, Driving While Intoxicated, Class B misdemeanor carrying a fine not to exceed \$2,000; confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days; or both such fine and confinement.

Sec 49.07, Intoxication Assault, Third degree felony with imprisonment for any term of not more than ten (10) years or less than two (2) years; may also be punished by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.

Sec 49.08, Intoxication Manslaughter, Second degree felony with imprisonment for any term of not more than twenty (20) years or less than two (2) years; may also be punished by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.

Sections 705 and 724 of the Texas Transportation Code provide for the testing of alcohol or controlled substance abuse and the revocation of a driver's license upon positive proof of alcohol or controlled substance abuse.

Sections 106.02, 106.04, and 106.05 of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code state that it is unlawful for a person under 21 years of age to purchase, possess or consume an alcoholic beverage except under limited circumstances set out in the statutes. These offenses are misdemeanors and call for fines that may be as high as \$1,000 for the repeat offender.

City of Houston Ordinance

In Section 3-3 of the Houston Ordinance Regulating Alcohol in the Central Business District, central business district (of which the college is a part) means the area depicted as the central business district of the city on the map that was adopted by City Council Resolution No. 93-109 and was approved by order of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission dated January 25, 1994, true copies of which map, resolution and order are on file in the Office of the City Secretary.

Licensed premises means the premises of any place for which a Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission permit or license has been issued that allows on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Open container means an alcoholic beverage container that is no longer sealed.

- a. It shall be unlawful for any person to be in possession of an open container in the central business district.
- b. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the public consumption of any alcoholic beverage in the central business district.
- c. It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the alleged offense took place in a motor vehicle, in a building not owned or controlled by the city, in a residential structure or on a licensed premises that is situated in the central business district (*Ord. No. 94-597, 2, 6-15-94*).

Health Risks

Drug and alcohol abuse is a major problem in the United States. Significant health risks are associated with the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol.

Alcohol consumption causes a number of marked changes in behavior. Even small amounts significantly impair the judgment and coordination required to drive a car safely, increasing the likelihood that the driver will be involved in an accident. Small to moderate amounts of alcohol cause marked impairments in higher mental functions, severely altering a person's ability to learn and remember information. Very large amounts cause respiratory depression and death. If combined with other depressants of the central nervous system, much smaller amounts of alcohol will produce the effects just described.

Repeated use of alcohol can lead to dependence. When alcohol dependence exists, sudden cessation of alcohol intake is likely to produce withdrawal symptoms, including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations and convulsions. Alcohol withdrawal can be life-threatening. Long-term consumption of large quantities of alcohol, particularly when combined with poor nutrition, can also lead to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and the liver.

Mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy may give birth to infants with fetal alcohol syndrome. These infants often suffer irreversible physical abnormalities and mental retardation. In addition, research indicates that children of alcoholic parents are at greater risk of becoming alcoholics than other children.

Available Alcohol and other Drug Prevention, Counseling, Treatment and Rehabilitation Programs

Resources are readily available to assist any person who is having a problem with substance abuse or who is concerned with someone else's drug or alcohol use. The college prefers to address problems concerning substance abuse, which could include illicit drug use, alcohol abuse, or misuse of prescription drugs, through rehabilitation methods, and will encourage individuals to seek treatment. However, if a student's or employee's conduct or actions would subject them to disciplinary action, disciplinary action cannot be avoided by a request for assistance.

Confidential referral for counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation programs are available to students from the Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs and to employees from the Director of Human Resources.

The Office of Human Resources and the Office of Student Academic Affairs have listings of alcohol and drug abuse counseling and rehabilitation centers, some of which are shown here:

Texas Lawyers Assistance Program

1-800-343-TLAP (8527)

TLAP is a committee of lawyers and judges throughout the state, a professional staff who are also lawyers, and a statewide network of volunteers, all of whom are committed to helping troubled law students and attorneys get the assistance and support they need with chemical dependency, stress, depression or similar problems. All communications are kept strictly confidential.

Partnership for Drug-Free Texas in Alliance with Texas Department of State Health Services

1-877-966-3784

Alcoholics Anonymous Intergroup

713-686-6300 (Main Office)

Al-Anon – Family or Adult Children of Alcoholics

713-683-7227

The Council on Recovery

713-942-4100

TRS The Right Step

*902 West Alabama
Houston, TX 77006
1-877-627-4389*

Menninger

*2801 Gessner Drive
Houston, TX 77080
713-275-5000*

This policy further implements the Illegal Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy originally adopted and implemented on September 4, 1990. The previously adopted policies concerning drugs and alcohol continue in effect and are not superseded hereby.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, HARASSMENT, NONDISCRIMINATION AND NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

South Texas College of Law Houston is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment, as well as other benefits, programs, and activities that are free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. To ensure compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations, and to affirm its commitment to promoting the goals of fairness and equity in all aspects of the educational enterprise, South Texas College of Law Houston has developed internal policies and procedures that will provide a prompt, fair, and impartial process for those involved in an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected class status, and for allegations of retaliation. The law school values and upholds the equal dignity of all members of its community and strives to balance the rights of the parties in what is often a difficult time for all involved.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 106, prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities operated by recipients of federal financial aid. Title IX states:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

South Texas College of Law Houston (“law school”) affirms its commitment to promote the goals of fairness and equity in all aspects of the educational enterprise. The core purpose of this policy is the prohibition of all forms of discrimination. When violation of these anti-discrimination or non-academic misconduct policies is reported, the allegations are subject to resolution using the law school’s “Process A” or “Process B” as described in the law schools’ full harassment policy found at Equity Resolution Process (ERP) as described in the policy found [here](#).

When the Respondent is a member of the law school community, a grievance process may be available regardless of the status of the Complainant, who may or may not be a member of the law school community. The procedures outlined in this policy may be applied to incidents, to patterns, or to the campus climate, all of which may be addressed and investigated in accordance with this policy.

TITLE IX COORDINATOR:

The Assistant Dean of Institutional Compliance serves as the Title IX Coordinator and ADA/Section 504 Coordinator and oversees implementation of the law school’s disability compliance and its policy on equal opportunity, harassment, and nondiscrimination. The Title IX Coordinator has the primary responsibility for coordinating the law school’s efforts related to investigation, resolution, and implementation of corrective measures and monitoring to stop, remediate, and prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation prohibited under this policy.

The Title IX Coordinator oversees all resolutions under this policy and acts to ensure that all law school representatives act with objectivity and impartiality and are assessed with respect to conflicts of interest or potential bias. To raise any concern involving a conflict of interest by the Title IX Coordinator, contact South Texas College of Law President and Dean Michael Barry at mbarry@stcl.edu. To raise concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest with any other administrator involved in the resolution process, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu or make a report at this [link](#).

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT INFORMATION:

Inquiries about and reports regarding this policy and procedure may be made internally to:

Assistant Dean Wanda T. Morrow
Title IX/ADA/504 Coordinator
Office of Institutional Compliance
South Texas College of Law Houston
1303 San Jacinto, Room 835T
Houston, Texas 77002-7006
Phone: (713) 646-1825
Email: TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu

Inquiries may be made externally to:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
Customer Service Hotline Number: (800) 421-3481
Fax: (202) 453-6012
TDD#: (877) 521-2172
Email: OCR@ed.gov
Web: <https://www.ed.gov/ocr>

Phone: (214) 661-9600
OCR.Dallas@ed.gov

Or

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
1999 Bryan St. Suite 1620
Dallas, Texas 75201-6810

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
Contact: <http://www.eeoc.gov/contact/>
Mickey Leland Building
1919 Smith Street 6th Floor

Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (800) 669-4000
Fax: (713) 651-4987

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation

Reports of discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation may be made using any of the following options:

- 1) Report online, using the reporting form posted at <http://www.stcl.edu/title-ix/submit-title-ix-report/>.
- 2) Report directly to the Title IX Coordinator:

Assistant Dean Wanda T. Morrow
Title IX/ADA 504 Coordinator
Office of Institutional Compliance
South Texas College of Law Houston
1303 San Jacinto, Room 835T
Houston, Texas 77002-7006
Phone: (713) 646-1825
Email: TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu

To request a printed copy of the complete policy and resolution processes on Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination, and Non-Academic Misconduct, please contact the [Title IX Coordinator](#).

The law school has also classified all employees as Mandated Reporters of any knowledge they have that a member of the community is experiencing harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. See the section on Mandated Reporting in the "Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination, and Non-Academic Misconduct Policy [here](#).

Academic Freedom and Sexual Harassment

This policy does not prohibit legitimate academic discussion or comment. Sexual relations and other themes relating to gender or sexuality are frequently the subject of law school lectures, classroom discussion, simulation of legal proceedings and transactions, academic role playing, or informal debate and discussion. Such discussion and comment is not to be regarded as sexual harassment as long as the participants do not engage in offensive conduct that exceeds the legitimate and reasonable limits of academic endeavor.

Grievance Procedure and Investigation

If any student feels he/she has been improperly harassed or if any student observes sexual harassment, the student should report the matter as soon as reasonably possible to the Title IX Coordinator. The manner of the law school's investigation, and any action with respect to the matter, will depend on the nature of the offense and whether the person against whom a report has been made is a member of the law school community.

Confidentiality

The law school understands that reports of harassment, and particularly of sexual harassment, frequently involve very private matters, and that the complaining party or other witnesses frequently wish not to be identified or disclosed to the accused or to persons outside the investigation. Moreover, the accused party frequently desires that the matter should be handled discreetly and confidentially. The law school will attempt to respect the needs of the parties for confidentiality insofar as is possible and fair to other participants in the investigation. However, confidentiality must sometimes give way to the needs of the investigation, fair procedure, or effective remedy or deterrence. Fairness and federal regulations requires that the person accused of harassment must know the identity of the accuser and other witnesses unless there is no dispute about the material facts and circumstances of the conduct alleged to be sexual harassment, or proof of the harassment does not depend on any particular witness. If the complaining party refuses to agree to disclosure of his/her identity to the accused, the college will cease further processing of the complaint, or treat the matter as one requiring informal action in order to counsel the responding party with respect to the conduct that provoked the charge.

The fact of the charge, the results of the law school's investigation and the law school's remedial action will ordinarily be treated by the law school as confidential, and to be discussed only between those involved in the investigation or remedial aspects of the matter, unless public disclosure of the law school's action is necessary to remedy the effects of a course or pattern of sexual harassment within the law school community, or unless the law requires disclosure to certain public authorities.

Policy Against Retaliation and Prohibition Against Malicious Charges

The definition of harassment is necessarily vague, and whether improper harassment has occurred frequently depends on circumstances and context unique to each case. Reasonable people sometimes disagree as to what constitutes improper harassment. Regardless of the outcome of a charge or investigation of harassment, the law school will not retaliate against a

person who has acted in good faith in filing a harassment charge or acting as a witness. Furthermore, the law school prohibits retaliation by any individual administrator or any other member of the law school community against a person who has acted in good faith in reporting harassment or acting as a witness. Charges made in bad faith, which the charging party knows to be untrue, or which are for malicious purposes, may result in formal disciplinary action.

Informal and Formal Actions to Remedy Harassment

The law schools goal in any case of harassment is to provide a remedy for the affected parties and to deter future misconduct. Refer to the law school's [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination and Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#) for resolution processes used to allegations of harassment or contact the Title IX Coordinator for questions or to obtain a copy of the policy.

WEAPONS LAWS

Pursuant to Texas Penal Code Section 46.03(a): A person commits an offense if, with a firearm, illegal knife, club, or prohibited weapon listed in Section 46.05(a), he intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly goes:

1. on the physical premises of a school, an educational institution, or a passenger transportation vehicle of a school or an educational institution, whether the school or educational institution is public or private, unless pursuant to written regulations or written authorization of the institution . . . Any such offense is a third-degree felony.

Section 46.03 (f) has been amended effective January 1, 1996 as follows:

it is not a defense to prosecution under this section that the actor possessed a handgun and was licensed to carry a concealed handgun under Article 4413(29ee), Revised Statutes.

The newly enacted Article 4413(29ee), License to Carry a Concealed Handgun, has caused Section 4, Chapter 46, of the Penal Code to be amended by adding Section 46.035(b)(2), Unlawful Carrying of Handgun by License Holder, prohibiting carrying "on the premises where a high school, collegiate, or professional sporting event or interscholastic event is taking place, unless the license holder is a participant in the event and a handgun is used in the event."

Therefore, South Texas College of Law Houston has put in place a policy that in effect will enforce any violation of Texas Penal Codes forbidding weapons in an educational institution.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON WEAPONS POLICY

South Texas College of Law Houston's weapons policy follows the Texas Penal Code in prohibiting the carrying or possession of any type of firearm, illegal knife, club or any other weapon, concealed or not, on the physical premises or in a passenger transportation vehicle of an educational institution. This includes any area of the college or off-site college premises, or any grounds or building where an activity sponsored by the college is being conducted, all college parking lots or any college vehicle, or the site of any college-related activities.

To do so constitutes a third-degree felony even though the offending party may be licensed under Texas's concealed handgun law. This applies to all constituents of the college, whether student, faculty, staff, vendor, applicant or any other category of visitor.

The only exception would be any law enforcement officer or government agent, whether in or out of uniform, whether on or off duty, who is required to carry a weapon as a matter of complying with the regulations of the agency by which employed.

Information Security Policies

All students, employees, and visitors are bound by the South Texas College of Law Houston Information Security Policies. The Policies may be found [here](#) in Stanley.

STUDENT SERVICES

Bookstore

Owned and operated by Barnes & Noble, the campus bookstore offers a selection of textbooks, supplements, apparel, and other supplies. For more information, visit the STCL Houston [bookstore](#) page.

Career Resource Center

The Career Resource Center (CRC) provides valuable guidance and services related to career exploration, resume writing, interviewing, and the job search. Students are encouraged to visit the CRC early and often; the process of career development should be ongoing to ensure a smooth transition after graduation.

The CRC offers a variety of services to help you along the way, including:

- Individual career counseling
- Creating or refining resumes and cover letters
- Panel discussions, programs, and workshops
- Mock interviews
- Recruitment programs, including on-campus interviews with local firms and other employers
- Job fairs
- Strategies, resources and tools for a successful job search
- Fax, copy, and computer services

For more information, and a schedule of workshops and recruiting events, visit the [Career Resources Center](#) page.

Copy Center Binding

The STCL Houston Copy Center is offering document binding to all students. Binding for students will be from 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Monday – Friday on the 8th floor in office 836T. Each student will be limited to 10 free binds with a blue or red cover page with or without print per semester.

NALP Career Services Restriction

As law school is a unique experience with a significant adjustment period, the CRC staff encourages students to focus the first several months of enrollment on understanding the educational process, developing a personal study strategy, and keeping up with academic requirements. In supporting this transition period, STCL Career Resource Center is adopting the rule previously set out by NALP that regulates law schools from initiating career-related communications to first-year students before October 15 (March 15 for spring start).

Communications and Connectivity

Each student is assigned a student email address and a login for STANLEY, the law school's online portal. Students can conduct most official college business through this portal, including registering for courses, retrieving exam numbers, reviewing fiscal account information, and checking grades/academic records. Students are responsible for reading and reviewing all information delivered via STANLEY, student email accounts, and campus mailboxes. Wi-Fi access is available throughout the law school. Students can access the wireless network via STANLEY.

Counseling Services

The Office of Student Academic Affairs offers student counseling services related to personal and professional concerns affecting academic progress, including mental, emotional, and physical health concerns. The office also administers a Faculty-Student Advisory program for second-semester students and provides referrals for professional assistance and wellness programs, when applicable. Students seeking counseling may make an appointment by contacting the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs.

Financial Aid

In accordance with the college's mission statement, The Financial Aid office ensures that all students receive the maximum financial aid that they are eligible including federal, state, and institutional aid and make the application process as seamless as possible and to eliminate any unnecessary barriers. The Financial Aid office also strives to deliver financial aid in timely manner to ensure that all students can pay tuition, living expenses, and purchase books without considerable lag time and eliminate unnecessary worry for students regarding their finances while attending law school

Library

The Fred Parks Law Library offers students access to more than 90 law-related databases; a comprehensive range of government documents; legal research guides; practice examinations; study aids; and special collections, including rare books, manuscripts, and archives. The Library observes extended service hours during final exam periods and abbreviated hours between semesters and during holidays. For more information about Library services, study room reservations, and hours of operation, visit the [Fred Parks Law Library](#) page.

Food, Drink, and Tobacco Policy

Snacks are allowed in the Library as long as their noise or smell are not disruptive to other patrons. Nonalcoholic beverages are permitted in the Library if stored in a spill-proof container. Tobacco products, vaporizers, and similar devices are prohibited.

Lockers & Mailboxes

Assigned Lockers

A limited number of lockers are available on a first-come, first-served basis for enrolled students accessible via your STANLEY portal:

- Campus Life
- Lockers
- Locker Agreement (Fall 2020 forward)

You must agree to and accept the Terms of Agreement. You can submit a request for a locker throughout the year, except May 1 – June 23. Students must clear out lockers at the end of the academic year. Students assigned a locker before the 2020 fall term may retain lockers through graduation.

You are required to obtain your own lock for the locker. The size of locks that fit are:

- 1) Master Lock 1500D 1-7/8 in. Wide Stainless Steel Preset Combination Padlock with 3/4 in. long shackle.
- 2) TSA-Accepted Nickel Set-Your-Own Combination Luggage Padlock. 1-3/16 in. wide durable metal body padlock; 3-dial set-your-own combination convenience.

If you have any questions please email Kirk Guillory, Student Organizations, Program Administrator, kguillory@stcl.edu. Please note: If you no longer use or need your locker, please release the locker in your STANLEY portal and notify the Student Organizations Office via kguillory@stcl.edu.

Mailboxes

Student mail can be retrieved from room 828T. You will receive an email from the department sending the mail that will include a mailbox number and 4-digit code to open the mailbox. Mail can be retrieved any time the school is open.

Parking

Two parking lots are available exclusively for students, at no additional charge. Lot 1 is located at the southwest corner of San Jacinto and Bell St., with entrance on San Jacinto. Lot 2 is located at the southeast corner of San Jacinto and Bell St., with entrance on Bell.

Students must provide vehicle information via Stanley self-service each semester of enrollment to gain access to student parking lots. Students must use their student ID to access the student lots, and are not permitted to allow access to anyone else for parking in those lots. A student's use of their ID card to give anyone else access is a violation of college policy. Any vehicle parked on a student lot with no form on file will be towed at the owner's expense. No overnight parking is authorized without prior authorization from the Security Department. The law school assumes no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss incurred as a result of parking on any student lot.

Registrar

The Registrar's Office is responsible for:

- Providing academic counseling related to class scheduling, attendance, exams, grading, etc.
- Enforcing South Texas College of Law Houston academic policies
- Facilitating registration, final examinations, and graduation
- Maintaining academic records for current and past students
- Maintaining student contact information

- Providing information to the Veterans Administration and to the Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVIS) for international students with an F1 visa status
- Certifying students for Texas and out-of-state bar examinations

The Registrar's Office provides the following upon request:

- Degree verifications
- Enrollment verifications
- Official and unofficial transcripts
- Letters of standing

Many of these services can be requested online via STANLEY.

Safety and Security

The safety and well-being of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors is a top priority at STCL Houston. The campus security team works to protect and secure the campus around the clock. Campus security officers provide escort to and from parking lots, motorist assistance, safety courses, and lost and found services. Security alerts will be posted on the Security page on STANLEY where students can also sign up to receive emergency notifications by text.

In compliance with the Federal Clery Act, the law school publishes an annual security report which details statistics for crimes committed on campus, in certain off-campus buildings, on property owned or controlled by the law school, and on public property immediately adjacent to the campus. The report also includes institutional policies concerning campus security, such as policies concerning sexual assault. Copies of this report are available in the Security Office or on the [Safety and Security](#) page.

Student Organizations Office

The Student Organizations Office is a resource for students interested in joining one of the law school's more than 30 student organizations, co-curricular organizations, publications, and law fraternities. Additionally, the Student Organizations Office staff provides general guidance regarding parking, housing, and other personal concerns. For more information visit the [Student Organizations](#) page.

Campus Directory

Senior Administration

Name	Title	Phone	E-mail
Michael Barry	President and Dean	713-646-1819	mbarry@stcl.edu
Steve Alderman	Vice President of Human Resources and General Counsel	713-646-1814	salderman@stcl.edu
	Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Finance & Business Services)	713-646-1888	
Alicia Cramer	Assistant Dean of Admissions	713-646-1810	acramer@stcl.edu
Catherine Greene Burnett	Vice President and Associate Dean for Experiential Education	713-646-1831	cburnett@stcl.edu
Ted Field	Vice President and Associate Dean for Faculty	713-646-1770	tfield@stcl.edu
Rob Galloway	Director of Advocacy		
Mandi Gibson	Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs, Registrar	713-646-1701	mgibson@stcl.edu
Mindy Guthrie	Vice President of Philanthropy and Alumni Relations	713-646-1797	mguthrie@stcl.edu
Jennifer Hudson	Senior Executive Assistant to the President and Dean, Corporate Secretary	713-646-1899	jhudson@stcl.edu
Nazleen Jiwani	Senior Director, Career Resources Center	713-646-1869	njiwani@stcl.edu
Colleen Manning	Senior Director of the Fred Parks Law Library	713-646-1729	cmanning@stcl.edu
Randy Marak	Vice President of Information Technology	713-646-2911	rmarak@stcl.edu
Shelby A. D. Moore	Director of Diversity, and Professor of Law	713-646-1884	smoore@stcl.edu
Jeffrey L. Rensberger	Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Research	713-646-1853	jrensberger@stcl.edu
Diane Summers	Vice President of Marketing and Communications	713-646-1794	dsummers@stcl.edu
Mark E. Steiner	Vice President and Associate Dean for Students	713-646-2904	msteiner@stcl.edu
Cherie Taylor	Vice President and Associate Dean for Academics	713-646-1856	ctaylor@stcl.edu
Lisa Yarrow	Assistant Dean for Academic Success and Professional Achievement, and Assistant Professor	713-646-1893	lyarrow@stcl.edu

Departments and Office

Department / Name	Title	Phone	E-mail
Academic Externships			
Elizabeth Dennis	Assistant Dean	713-646-1748	edennis@stcl.edu
Accounting Services			
Kim Goodwin	Interim Controller	713-646-1752	kgoodwin@stcl.edu
Admissions			
Melanie Krugel	Director of Admissions	713-646-2931	mkrugel@stcl.edu
Assessment and Research			
Francesca Bonaduce De Nigris	Director	713-646-1893	fbonaducedenigris@stcl.edu
Bar Exam Preparation			
Tony Zamora	Assistant Director, Academic Success and Professional Achievement	713-646-1823	tzamora@stcl.edu

Board of Advocates			
Robert Galloway	Director of Appellate Advocacy	713-646-2927	rgalloway@stcl.edu
Bookstore			
Sarah Meadows	Manager	713-646-1756	sm541@bncollege.com
Business Law Journal			
David East	Professor of Law	713-646-1879	deast@stcl.edu
Career Resource Center			
Nazleen Jiwani	Director	713-646-1869	njiwani@stcl.edu
Clinical Studies and Continuing Education			
Catherine Greene Burnett	Associate Dean for Experiential Education	713-646-1831	cburnett@stcl.edu
Financial Aid and Scholarships			
Emily Sillcocks	Director	713-646-1824	esillcocks@stcl.edu
Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolutions			
Debra Berman	Director	713-646-2997	dberman@stcl.edu
Help Desk - IT			
		713-646-1555	
Human Resources			
Lauren Devore	Human Resources Manager	713-646-1814	ldevore@stcl.edu
Information Technology			
George Milz	Director	713-646-1864	gmilz@stcl.edu
Institutional Compliance			
Wanda Morrow	Assistant Dean	713-646-1824	wmorrow@stcl.edu
Instructional Technology Services			
Terry Smith	Director	713-646-1708	tsmith@stcl.edu
International Programs			
Wanda Morrow	Assistant Dean	713-646-1824	wmorrow@stcl.edu
Law Review			
Jake Hubble	Coordinator	713-646-1749	jhubble@stcl.edu
Library			
Colleen Manning	Director	713-646-1729	cmanning@stcl.edu
Patron Services Desk		713-646-1711	
Reference Desk		713-646-1712	
Marketing and Communications			
Amanda Green	Communications Manager	713-646-1760	agree@stcl.edu
Claire Caton	Public Relations Manager	713-646-1799	ccaton@stcl.edu
Amanda Simonian	Web Content Manager	713-646-1791	asimonian@stcl.edu
Philanthropy and Alumni Relations			
Julie Blair	Director, Foundation & Corporate Engagement	713-646-1793	jblair@stcl.edu
Kia Wissmiller	Director, Annual Giving	713-646-1819	kwissmiller@stcl.edu
Ernesto Martinez	Coordinator, Alumni Engagement	713-646-1804	emartinez@stcl.edu
LaCresha Lamb	Director, Alumni Engagement	713-646-2968	llamb@stcl.edu
Vacant	Executive Assistant	713-646-1801	alumni@stcl.edu
Property Services			
Bill Hill	Director	713-646-1765	whill@synermarkprop.com
Gerardo Ramirez	Reservations & Scheduling	713-646-1656	gramirez.contract@stcl.edu
Purchasing and Office Services			
Dorrie Rushing	Senior Director, Purchasing and Office Services	713-646-1898	drushing@stcl.edu
Registrar/Student Services			
Mandi Gibson	Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs, Registrar	713-646-1701	mgibson@stcl.edu
Security			
Kent Brazelton	Director	713-646-1889	kbrazelton@stcl.edu
Student Academic Affairs			

Gena Singleton	Assistant Dean	713-646-1778	gsingleton@stcl.edu
Lyndsay Garmond-Duvernay	Director and Case Manager for Behavioral Intervention and Education	713-646-2967	lgarmond@stcl.edu
Student Bar Association			
		713-646-1741	
Title IX/ADA/504 Coordinator			
Wanda Morrow	Assistant Dean	713-646-1825	wmorrow@stcl.edu
Transactional Law Certificate Program			
John J. Worley	Professor of Law	713-646-1863	jworley@stcl.edu
Transactional Practice Center			
David East	Professor of Law	713-646-1879	deast@stcl.edu

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