

# Student Handbook

2025-2026

1303 San Jacinto  
Houston, TX 77002



South Texas  
COLLEGE OF LAW  
— HOUSTON —

PRIVATE AND INDEPENDENT  
SINCE 1923.

## Table of Contents

<b>Our Mission</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2024-2025 Academic Calendar</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Wellness at South Texas College of Law Houston</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Accommodations For Students with Disabilities</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Nondiscrimination Policy</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Knowledge of Law School Regulations, Curriculum, and Rules</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Truthfulness and Disclosure: Prerequisite to Admission and Graduation</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Representations, Warranties, and Claims</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Alcohol, Drug, Sex Offense, and Harassment Prevention (Title IX)</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Academic Program</b> .....	<b>5</b>
The Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) Degree Program	5
Learning Outcomes for Graduates of South Texas College of Law Houston .....	5
Degree Requirements .....	6
Required Courses .....	6
Course Sequence – First 43 Hours – For Students Who Began Before Fall 2025 .....	8
Course Sequence – First 43 Hours – For Students Who Began in Fall 2025 or Later .....	9
Upper Level Required Courses.....	10
Degree Planning Resources.....	10
Academic Supervision .....	11
Conditional Required Courses Based on Cumulative GPA.....	11
<b>Course Limits and Mutual Exclusions</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Academic Policies</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Student Enrollment .....	13
Credit Hours for Intersessions, Semesters (Fall/Spring), and Sessions (Summer) .....	13
Overloads .....	144

Underloads .....	15
Graduates with 7 or Fewer Hours Remaining .....	15
Work Limits.....	15
<b>Credit-Hour Policy</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Special Academic Opportunities</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Experiential Education Program.....	18
Joint Degree Program – JD/MBA.....	18
Certificate in Transactional Law Practice .....	19
Certificate in Tax Law .....	19
Concentration in Texas Advocacy .....	20
The Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution.....	20
Exchange and Study Abroad Programs .....	21
Visiting Other ABA-Approved Law Schools .....	21
<b>Attendance and Participation</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Coursework Deadlines.....	23
<b>Registration and Withdrawal Procedures</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Add/Drop Procedures.....	23
Withdrawal without Academic Prejudice .....	23
Course Audits .....	24
<b>Final Examinations</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Administration of Exams .....	24
Anonymity .....	24
Timeliness.....	24
Allowed and Prohibited Items.....	25
Reporting Exam Misconduct .....	25
Take Home Exams .....	25
<b>Assessment Methods</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>Final Examination Reschedules And Deferred Final Examinations</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Taking a Reschedule/Deferred Final Examination ..	28
<b>Grades</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Grading System .....	29
Method for Computing Averages.....	29
Required First-year Grade Distribution.....	30
Mandatory Grading Curves for Other Courses .....	30

Retaking Required Courses .....	30
Grade Reductions .....	30
Grade Deadline.....	31
Grading Notifications .....	31
Review of Grades .....	31
Incomplete Grades .....	31
Class Ranking.....	32
<b>Honors and Recognition Programs.....</b>	<b>32</b>
Dean’s Honor List .....	32
CALI Excellence for the Future Awards® .....	32
Law Fraternities.....	32
Order of the Lytae .....	32
Pro Bono Honors Program .....	32
<b>Graduation Ceremony.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Graduation with Honors.....	33
<b>Academic Standing and Academic Deficiency Policy.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Academic Risk, Dismissal, and Probation.....	34
Extracurricular Activities and Academic Deficiency.....	35
Readmission Policy.....	35
<b>Financial Policies and Procedures .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Tuition, Fees, and Billing .....	35
Special Enrollment Circumstances.....	36
Methods of Payment.....	36
Deferred Tuition Payment Option .....	37
Account Holds .....	37
Refunds and Returns.....	37
Intersessions.....	38
Accounting Services Office Approvals.....	38
<b>Financial Aid .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Bar Examination Information .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Declaration of Intention to Study Law .....	39
Application to Take Texas Bar Examination .....	39
Inquiries to Texas Board of Law Examiners .....	39
Bar Examination 86-hour Rule .....	40
Completion Date for Seminars and Clinics/Externships in Final Semester .....	40

Supervised Practice Card.....	40
Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE).....	40
<b>Student Complaints and Appeals Process.....</b>	<b>41</b>
General Complaints .....	41
Academic Appeals .....	41
Complaints Concerning the Program of Legal Education.....	41
<b>General Policies and Disclosures.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Logo and Name Usage.....	42
Confidentiality of Official Student Records .....	43
Acceptable Facility Use.....	43
<b>RULES AND POLICIES .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>I. Student Conduct Code.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>II. Academic Misconduct .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>III. Non-Academic Misconduct.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>IV. Misconduct on Application for Admission</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>V. Disciplinary Procedures.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Alcohol Service Policy.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Policy for Hosting and Publicizing College Events .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Drug Abuse Prevention Policy.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Procedures for Use in Illegal Drug Cases .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Illegal Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination, and Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>South Texas College of Law Houston Policy Against Harassment .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Weapons Laws.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Student Resources .....</b>	<b>66</b>
Bookstore .....	66
Career Resource Center .....	66
1L Career Services Restriction .....	66

Communications and Connectivity .....	67	Parking.....	68
Copy Center Binding.....	67	Safety and Security.....	69
Financial Aid .....	67	Student Engagement Office .....	69
Library.....	67	Student Services .....	69
Lockers .....	68	Student Support .....	70
Mailboxes .....	68	<b>Free Speech Policy .....</b>	<b>71</b>



PRIVATE AND INDEPENDENT SINCE 1923

## Our Mission

*South Texas College of Law Houston provides a diverse body of students with the opportunity to obtain an exceptional legal education, preparing graduates to serve their community and the profession with distinction.*

# 2025-2026 Academic Calendar



## 2025-2026 Academic Calendar

### FALL INTERSESSION & FALL SEMESTER



### SPRING INTERSESSION & SPRING SEMESTER



### SUMMER SESSION



● Classet Begin   
 ● Classet End   
 ■ Exams   
 ■ Holidays   
 □ Grade Deadlines   
 □ Commencement

FALL INTERSESSION CLASSES BEGIN	AUG. 11	SPRING SEMESTER CLASSES BEGIN	JAN. 14
FALL INTERSESSION CLASSES END	AUG. 16	MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY	JAN. 19**
FALL SEMESTER CLASSES BEGIN	AUG. 18	SPRING BREAK	MARCH 9-13
SUMMER GRADE DEADLINE	AUG. 21	SPRING SEMESTER CLASSES END	APR. 29
LABOR DAY HOLIDAY	SEP. 1*	SPRING FINAL EXAMS	MAY 5-14
FALL SEMESTER CLASSES END	NOV. 24	SPRING COMMENCEMENT (Tentative)	MAY 16
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	NOV. 26-29	SUMMER SESSION CLASSES BEGIN	MAY 26
FALL FINAL EXAMS	DEC. 2-11	MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY	MAY 25
FALL COMMENCEMENT (Tentative)	DEC. 13	SPRING GRADE DEADLINE	JUNE 11
FALL GRADE DEADLINE 1 (for 1+ Year courses)	DEC. 26	SPRING INTERSESSION GRADE DEADLINE	JUNE 11
SPRING INTERSESSION CLASSES BEGIN	JAN. 7	JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY	JUNE 19
FALL GRADE DEADLINE 2 (for upper-level courses)	JAN. 8	INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY	JULY 4***
FALL INTERSESSION GRADE DEADLINE	JAN. 8	SUMMER SESSION CLASSES END	JULY 16
SPRING INTERSESSION CLASSES END	JAN. 13	SUMMER FINAL EXAMS	JULY 20-24

#### REQUIRED CLASS MAKE-UP DAYS

- \*Monday classes missed on September 1<sup>st</sup> (Labor Day Holiday) will meet on Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>.
- \*\*Monday classes missed on January 19<sup>th</sup> (MLK Holiday) will meet on Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.
- \*\*\*Friday classes missed on July 4<sup>th</sup> (Independence Day) will meet on Thursday, July 16<sup>th</sup>.

To see any upcoming important events (such as grade deadlines, registration dates, etc.), please reference the Important Dates found here: <https://www.stcl.edu/registrar>

## Wellness at South Texas College of Law Houston

At South Texas College of Law Houston, we prioritize the well-being of our students. Your overall health and wellness are integral to your academic success. The Office of Student Support is here to provide you with resources and support related to personal and professional concerns. For more information on the range of services available, please refer to the [Student Support section of this handbook](#).

### 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 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 Support. The documentation guidelines for documenting disabilities are available on the Campus Life tab on Stanley and in the Office of Student Support. A non-inclusive referral list of qualified diagnosticians and health care providers is available in the Office of Student Support.

If a [Student Application for Accommodations](#) is denied, the student can pursue two actions:

1. Submit new, or additional, information that the law school will consider, provided the information is submitted before the deadlines described above. The student can discuss the feasibility of this option with the Office of Student Support 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 the ADA/504 Coordinator. Complete the [ADA Accommodations Appeal form](#) stating the specific reasons for the appeal. The appeal does not include a hearing at which new evidence, or oral arguments will be considered. The ADA/504 Coordinator or a three-member committee appointed to hear the appeal will not consider, for the first time, information that was not previously submitted and considered by the administration in making the initial decision regarding a request for accommodations. The decision of the ADA/504 Coordinator or a committee appointed to hear the appeal is final.

In case of a medical emergency that results in a disability, the student should contact the Office of Student Support 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 Support.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

South Texas College of Law Houston adheres to all federal and state civil rights laws and regulations 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, sex, pregnancy, source of income, place of business, residence, creed, ethnicity, national origin (including ancestry), citizenship status, physical or mental disability (including perceived disability), age, marital status, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran or military status (including disabled veteran, recently separated veteran, active duty wartime or campaign badge veteran, and Armed Forces Service Medal veteran), predisposing genetic characteristics, domestic violence survivor status, socio-economic class, family members' educational background, work or other background experiences, culture, political viewpoint, language, and other characteristics that vary among people and groups within society or any other protected category under

applicable local, state, or federal law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any grievance process on campus, with 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 law school communications delivered via 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 law school, by one of its committees, or by an official of the law school) 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 their 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 Office of Student Support 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 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.

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

The Office of Student Support 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](#).

## Academic Program

### *The Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) Degree Program*

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. STCL Houston offers several schedule options to provide a diverse body of students with the opportunity to obtain an exceptional legal education: full-time and part-time; with on-campus, online, and hybrid options.

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### *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 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.

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#### Degree Requirements

A candidate for a Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) degree must fulfill the following criteria:

- Must meet all entrance requirements.
- Successfully complete all required courses as indicated in the chart below with a passing grade at STCL Houston, unless they are accepted when transferring to the college.
- Earn at least 90 credit hours no earlier than 24 months and no later than 84 months after initial enrollment. No more than 30 credit hours can be earned at, and transferred from, other ABA-accredited law schools.
- Achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.300 or better.
- The degree will be conferred in the semester when all requirements are finally satisfied, and if any of these degree requirements are not met, the anticipated graduation date will move to the next semester, with all requirements to be fulfilled no later than one year after the original anticipated graduation term.

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#### Required Courses

Outside of the courses listed below, additional courses are required for students whose GPAs fall within a specific criterion as indicated in the [Academic Standing and Academic Deficiency](#) Policy section.

##### Required Courses for Students Who Began Before Fall 2025:

1st & 2nd Year Required Courses		Upper-Level Required Courses
Civil Procedure I and II	Federal Income Taxation	Criminal Procedure
Constitutional Law	Introduction to Law Study	First Amendment Law
Contracts I and II	Legal Research & Writing I and II	Professional Responsibility (by 60 <sup>th</sup> credit hour)
Criminal Law	Property I and II	Substantial Writing Requirement
Evidence	Torts I and II	6 Credit Hours of Experiential Learning Courses (advocacy, clinical, externship, or simulation).

**Required Courses for Students Who Began in Fall 2025 or Later:**

1st & 2nd Year Required Courses		Additional Required Courses
Civil Procedure I and II	First Amendment Law	Substantial Writing Requirement
Constitutional Law	Introduction to Law Study	9 Credit Hours of Experiential Learning Courses (advocacy, clinical, externship, or simulation), and one course must be in a “live client” clinic or externship.
Contracts	Legal Research & Writing I and II	
Criminal Law	Professional Responsibility (by 60 <sup>th</sup> credit hour)	
Evidence	Property	
Federal Income Taxation	Torts	

**Course Sequence – First 43 Hours – For Students Who Began Before Fall 2025**

Students will be administratively assigned (“block scheduled”) to sections for their first 43 hours of required courses. Upon completion of the first academic year, students are allowed to deviate from their assigned section or change enrollment status without prior approval. Students can enroll in an elective course, upper level required course, or study abroad program if they have completed, or are concurrently enrolled in, the first 30 hours of required courses.

<u>Full-Time Students</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Part-Time Students</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>
<b>First Semester</b>		<b>First Year Fall Semester</b>	
Civil Procedure I	3	Civil Procedure I	3
Contracts I	3	Criminal Law	3
Criminal Law	3	Introduction to Law Study	1
Introduction to Law Study	1	Legal Research and Writing I	3
Legal Research and Writing I	3	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10</b>
Torts I	3		
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>First Year Spring Semester</b>	
<b>Second Semester</b>		Contracts I	3
Civil Procedure II	3	Legal Research and Writing II	2
Contracts II	3	Torts I	3
Legal Research and Writing II	2	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>8</b>
Property I	3	<b>First Year Summer Session*</b>	
Torts II	3	Contracts II	3
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>14</b>	Torts II	3
<b>Third Semester</b>		<b>Total hours</b>	<b>6</b>
Constitutional Law	4	<b>Second Year Fall Semester</b>	
Evidence	3	Civil Procedure II	3
Federal Income Taxation	3	Constitutional Law	4
Property II	3	Property I	3
Electives	3	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total hours maximum</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Second Year Spring Semester</b>	
		Evidence	3
		Property II	3
		Electives	3
		<b>Total hours maximum</b>	<b>9</b>
		<b>Second Year Summer Session*</b>	
		Federal Income Taxation	3
		<b>Total hours</b>	<b>3</b>

\*Contracts II, Federal Income Taxation, and Torts II are only offered in the evening in the summer sessions.

**Course Sequence – First 43 Hours – For Students Who Began in Fall 2025 or Later**

Students will be administratively assigned (“block scheduled”) to sections for the following 42 hours of required courses. Subject to this rule, students can enroll in an elective course, upper-level required course, or study-abroad program if they have completed, or are concurrently enrolled in, the first 30 hours of required courses.

<b><u>Full-Time Students</u></b>	<b><u>Cr. Hrs.</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time Students</u></b>	<b><u>Cr. Hrs.</u></b>
<b>First Semester</b>		<b>First Year Fall Semester</b>	
Civil Procedure I	3	Civil Procedure I	3
Contracts	4	Criminal Law	3
Introduction to Law Study	1	Introduction to Law Study	1
Legal Research and Writing I	3	Legal Research and Writing I	3
Torts	4		
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Second Semester</b>		<b>First Year Spring Semester</b>	
Civil Procedure II	3	Contracts	4
Criminal Law	3	Legal Research and Writing II	2
Constitutional Law	4	Legal Skills*	1
Legal Research and Writing II	2	Torts	4
Property	4		
Legal Skills*	1	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>16-17</b>	<b>First Year Summer Session</b>	
<b>Third Semester</b>		Property	4
Evidence	3	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>4</b>
Federal Income Taxation	3	<b>Second Year Fall Semester</b>	
First Amendment	2	Civil Procedure II	3
Elective or Advanced Legal Skills**	2-4	Constitutional Law	4
Electives	2-4	Professional Responsibility or Advanced Legal Skills**	3
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>12-16</b>	<b>Total hours</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Fourth Semester</b>		<b>Second Year Spring Semester</b>	
Professional Responsibility	3	Evidence	3
Electives	9-13	Federal Income Taxation	3
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>12-16</b>	First Amendment	2
		Elective (if chosen)	2-3
		<b>Total hours</b>	<b>8-11</b>
		<b>Second Year Summer Session</b>	
		Electives (if chosen)	4-7
		<b>Total hours</b>	<b>4-7</b>
		<b>Third Year Fall Semester</b>	
		Professional Responsibility (if not already taken)	3
		Electives	5-8
		<b>Total hours</b>	<b>8-11</b>

\*Legal Skills is required for and limited to students with a cumulative GPA below 2.70 after the student’s first semester. This course is graded Pass/Fail.

\*\*Advanced Legal Skills is required for and limited to students with a cumulative GPA below 2.70 entering the semester in which it is listed above.

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## Upper Level Required Courses

### Professional Responsibility

Must be taken by the semester or session in which a student completes their 60th credit hour. This is a letter graded, 3 credit hour bar course.

### Experiential Learning Courses

All intersession courses and courses listed as “Experiential Learning Courses” on the semester schedules will count toward this requirement.

**For students who began before Fall 2025:** At least six (6) credit hours of experiential learning coursework must be completed before graduation.

**For students who began in Fall 2025 or later:** At least nine (9) credit hours of experiential learning coursework must be completed, and one (1) experiential course must be a “live client” clinic or externship.

### Substantial Writing Requirement

This requirement can be satisfied by completing one of the following:

- A student who has at least 30 earned, or in-progress, credit hours may enroll in the following courses as long as they have taken or are currently enrolled in all the “block scheduled” courses\* and meet any special prerequisites for the course in which they wish to enroll:
  - **Paper Seminars:** Must 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
  - **Supervised Research:** Must earn a grade of C or better on a [supervised research paper](#) under the direction of a full-time faculty member; or
- **Law Review:** Complete four semesters and all requirements for academic credit for [Law Review](#), including completion of all writing assignments; or
- **CURRENTS:** Complete a minimum of two semesters and satisfy all requirements for academic credit for [CURRENTS: Journal of International Economic Law](#), including completion of all writing requirements; or
- **Advanced Appellate Practice:** Complete two semesters and satisfy all requirements for academic credit for Advanced Appellate Practice
- **Beginning in Spring 2025,** the substantial writing project above must be 6,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and tabular material) or 7,200 words (including footnotes and tabular material). The remaining obligations listed above remain the same.

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## Degree Planning Resources

### Course Listings

Course listings is a searchable resource available on the law school’s website at [stcl.edu/registrar](http://stcl.edu/registrar) 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, Experiential Learning, Paper Seminars).

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\* “Block scheduled” courses are the required courses to which students are administratively assigned. These courses include Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Legal Research & Writing, Torts, Constitutional Law, Evidence, Federal Income Taxation, and Property. See “Course Sequence – First 43 Hours” above.

### Plan Future Classes

The online course planner tool is available on STANLEY for students to create up to 3 course schedules for future terms. Students can load their plans to add the classes to their schedule during registration.

Students may also use the [Registration Degree Audit Worksheet](#) to verify degree requirements.

### 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. Available at <https://www.stcl.edu/academics/pathways-to-practice/>.

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### Academic Supervision

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 on Academic Supervision must satisfy the following special requirements as a condition for graduation:

**Students who began before Fall 2025:** Enroll and receive a passing grade in the courses listed below.

- Agency and Partnership
- Corporations
- Family Law
- ~~Secured Transactions~~ (as of November 2025, no longer required)
- Wills, Trusts & Estates
- Bar Preview Program (must register in the fall or spring semester before graduation or the semester before taking the bar exam, whichever comes first)

**Students who began in Fall 2025 or later:** Enroll and receive a passing grade in the courses listed below.

- Agency and Partnership or Corporations
  - Criminal Procedure
  - Family Law
  - Bar Preview Program (must register in the fall or spring semester before graduation or the semester before taking the bar exam, whichever comes first)
- 

### Conditional Required Courses Based on Cumulative GPA

#### Legal Skills

**For students who began before Spring 2025:** This course is required and limited to all students whose first semester cumulative GPA is below 2.400.

**For students who began in Spring 2025 or later:** This course is required and limited to all students whose first semester cumulative GPA is below 2.700.

This is a one-semester, one-credit-hour course for students who are academically at risk following their first semester of law school enrollment. The course is graded as pass/fail. It is designed to help students remediate

basic law school skills 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 to be successful on the bar exam and in practice.

### **Advanced Legal Skills**

This course is a graded, three-credit-hour course. It introduces students to several critical skills:

1. understanding how to study properly for the bar examination,
2. appreciating the different methods used by bar examiners to test knowledge and skills,
3. working towards mastery of bar exam multiple choice and essay skills; and
4. developing a deeper ability to engage in self-regulated learning. No student with a GPA of 2.700 or greater may take this course.

**For students who began before Spring 2025:** Required for and limited to students with a cumulative GPA of 2.700 or lower entering their penultimate (second to last) fall/spring semester and must be taken prior to the Bar Preview Program course.

### **For students who began in Spring 2025 or later:**

- Full-time students: This course must be taken by students with a cumulative GPA less than 2.700 entering their third semester.
- Part-time students: This course must be taken by students with a cumulative GPA less than 2.700 entering their second year fall semester.

### **Bar Preview Program**

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

## Course Limits and Mutual Exclusions

Type of Course	Maximum Hours/Number of Courses Allowed	Course Choices
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, legal clinics
Trial Advocacy Course	1 Course	Civil Trial, Criminal Trial or Family Law Trial
Transactional Capstone Courses	1 Course	Corporate, Business Finance, Energy, International Business, Oil & Gas or Real Estate
Transactional Foundation Courses	1 Course	Contract Building Blocks or Contract Negotiation and Drafting
Bar Writing Courses	1 Course	Bar Readiness Writing or Writing for Law Practice
Pass/Fail Courses	24 Hours	After the first 30 hours of instruction, no student may enroll for more than 24 hours of Pass/Fail Courses.

## Academic Policies

### *Student Enrollment*

All students are required to enroll for classes during each fall and spring semester. Students who fail to attend all their classes and do not withdraw from 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 Office of Student Support. Students must send an email to [studentsupport@stcl.edu](mailto:studentsupport@stcl.edu) when they plan to return. Students withdrawing from their first semester must reapply for admission.

### *Credit Hours for Intersessions, Semesters (Fall/Spring), and Sessions (Summer)*

STCL Houston offers courses for the fall, spring, and summer terms, along with intersessions that directly precede the fall and spring semesters. Each of these terms—intersessions, semesters (fall/spring), and sessions (summer)—has its own set of start and end dates, add/drop periods, and disbursement dates, all of which can be referenced in the [Academic Year Important Dates](#). Additionally, the following chart outlines the minimum/maximum credit hours allowed for each term for part-time and full-time students:

**Enrollment Minimum/Maximum Hours:**

Part of Term	Part-Time	Full-Time
Fall/Spring Intersession <sup>1</sup>	1-3	N/A
Fall/Spring Semester	8 <sup>2</sup> -11	12-16
Summer Session <sup>3</sup>	1-9	1-9

In cases where a student is enrolled in intersession courses, the hours will be combined with the registered hours for the fall/spring term on the registration page. Students must ensure that they register for no more than 11 hours (part-time students) and 16 hours (full-time students) for the fall and spring semesters.

**Course Loads for Veterans' Benefit Certifications:**

Part of Term	Less than Half-Time	Half-Time	Three-Quarter-Time	Full-Time
Fall/Spring Intersessions	1-3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fall/ Spring Semesters	1-5	6-8	9-11	12-16
Summer Session	1-2	3-4	5	6-9

**Overloads**

Students must submit an [Overload/Underload Request form](#) to request approval for an overload in order to take more than 16 credit hours in a fall/spring semester. Grade point average, the type of course work, and final exams are some of the factors considered in evaluating a student's overload request. Every credit hour approved over 16 hours will be charged at the [hourly tuition rate](#) in addition to the full-time tuition, except for students required to take Legal Skills, for which no extra tuition will be charged. Students registered for intersession courses in addition to the full-term courses do not need to submit an overload request unless the full-term courses exceed 16 credit hours.

Overload requests do not apply to summer sessions.

ABA rules prohibit a student from taking more than 20% of the credits needed for graduation in each semester; therefore, a student can receive permission to take no more than 18 credits for the fall/spring semesters.

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<sup>1</sup> Students with 30 or more earned hours are eligible to register for intersessions.

<sup>2</sup> Students must be registered for a minimum of 6 credit hours to be eligible to receive financial aid and for loan deferments.

<sup>3</sup> To be eligible for financial aid during summer sessions, students must be registered for a minimum of 3 credit hours. Financial aid designates 3-5 credit hours as part-time enrollment and 6-9 credit hours as full-time enrollment.

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### **Underloads**

Students must submit an [Overload/Underload Request form](#) to request approval for an underload in order to take 7 or fewer hours in a fall or spring semester unless they are graduating (see below). Additionally, students approved to take 6 or fewer credit hours are eligible to request the underload tuition rate.

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### **Graduates with 7 or Fewer Hours Remaining**

Students in their final semester who need less than 8 hours to graduate are permitted, without prior approval, to enroll for 7 or fewer credit hours. The student will be charged the hourly tuition rate for the applicable semester.

**Note:** Students must be registered for at least 6 credit hours to be eligible for financial aid during the fall or spring terms. Students must be registered for 3 credit hours to be eligible for financial aid during the summer term.

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### **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.

## **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)<sup>1</sup> and by the Department of Education.<sup>2</sup> 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 an examination period. The summer session consists of seven weeks of class meetings followed by a five-day examination period. The fall and spring 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 fall and spring 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 an 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	60 minutes	900 minutes	120 minutes	1,800 minutes	2,700 minutes
2	120 minutes	1,800 minutes	240 minutes	3,600 minutes	5,400 minutes
3	180 minutes	2,700 minutes	360 minutes	5,400 minutes	8,100 minutes
4	240 minutes	3,600 minutes	480 minutes	7,200 minutes	10,800 minutes

### Summer Sessions

Courses offered during the summer sessions typically are scheduled to meet for seven weeks followed by a five-day 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

### Fall and Spring Intersessions

Courses offered during the fall and spring intersessions are designed to focus on experiential training. The intersessions are one weeklong, 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 Legal Clinics and Academic Externships

Each legal clinic and externship placement includes a classroom component. Students receive one semester credit hour for performing 45 hours of supervised law practice-related work. Academic credit is awarded on a high pass/pass/low pass/fail basis.

### Online Courses

Online courses meet the definition of standard faculty-student 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 is 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 – are 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. Some courses are taught through a blend of synchronous and asynchronous methods. Active academic engagement occurs through various interactive methods, including using formative assessment; 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 chats).

## Special Academic Opportunities

### *Experiential Education Program*

The Experiential Education Program at South Texas College of Law Houston offers three types of experiential learning: Simulations, Academic Externships, and Legal Clinics. Successful participation in any of these courses counts toward completion of a student's Experiential Learning course requirement. All clinics and externships are graded as High Pass/Pass/Low Pass/Fail. To view a complete list of the law school's offerings, visit the [Experiential Education](#) page. Course availability and enrollment requirements can be found on the semester schedule or the [Course Listings](#).

Experiential learning courses fall into four categories: (1) advocacy, (2) clinics and externships, (3) drafting and research, and (4) simulation courses.

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.

### **Academic Externships**

#### **How to Register**

Students who have completed their first 30 hours of coursework can receive 2, 3, or 4 credit hours for their work in government offices, judges' chambers, non-profit organizations, hospital legal departments, or other approved settings.

Interested students are encouraged to contact Assistant Director Aimee Maldonado ([amaldonado@stcl.edu](mailto:amaldonado@stcl.edu)) or Ben Santillán ([bsantillan@stcl.edu](mailto:bsantillan@stcl.edu)) to get more information about potential placements and to suggest additional placements that may meet the school's criteria for inclusion in the Academic Externships Program. A student may take the same externship placement a second time with approval.

**Enrollment requires approval before registering.** Submit an [Add/Drop/Waiver](#) to receive approval and an Authorization Code provided by the Externship Coordinator. Send a copy of your unofficial transcript to [bsantillan@stcl.edu](mailto:bsantillan@stcl.edu). **DO NOT** attach your transcript to the [Add/Drop/Waiver](#).

### **Legal Clinics**

#### **How to Register**

There is no preapproval required to register for legal clinics.

Most legal clinics only require that students have completed the first 30 credit hours. A student must contribute 45 hours in the clinic for each hour of academic credit received. Students enrolled in legal 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.

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### *Joint Degree Program – JD/MBA*

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. Please contact Associate Dean Ted Field.

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### ***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, Professor John Worley. To join the program, you must first have an interview with Professor Worley.

#### **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:
  - Agency and Partnership
  - Corporations
  - 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):
  - Commercial Real Estate Finance Practice
  - Contract Building Blocks
  - Contracts Negotiation and Drafting
- » One of the following capstone transactional skills courses (typically taken in final semester):
  - Transactional Skills – Business Finance
  - Transactional Skills – Corporate
  - Transactional Skills – International Business
  - Transactional Skills – Oil and Gas
  - Transactional Skills – Real Estate
- » Satisfaction of the substantial writing requirement by writing on a business law or transactional law practice-related topic.

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### ***Certificate in Tax Law***

South Texas College of Law Houston has an excellent reputation within the Texas tax law community and with major tax LL.M. programs. The tax certificate program will help build on that reputation, making it easier for

employers and schools to see that our students have the requisite knowledge and skills to practice in the tax area effectively and seamlessly.

### **Certificate Requirements**

After completing the first 30 credit hours of required courses, students are eligible to interview for entry into the program. The interview should be done with either co-director of the Tax Certificate Program: Professor Bruce McGovern or Professor Kevin Yamamoto.

- *GPA Requirement to enter the program:* Due to the rigor of the tax curriculum, students must have a GPA of 2.700 or higher to enter the program. This is higher than the GPA to be in academic good standing (GPA of 2.300).
- *Overall Certificate GPA:* Successful completion of the certificate program requires students to have a cumulative 3.000 GPA or higher in all tax certificate classes.

Students may elect to enter the program at any time before graduation. To receive the certificate students must fulfill the below requirements.

To earn the certificate in Tax Law, students must take the following courses: Federal Income Taxation (a required course for all students), Advanced Federal Income Taxation, Federal Tax Research, and the Low Income Taxpayer Clinic.

Students must also take:

1. Corporate Taxation and Partnership and Subchapter S Taxation and
2. Either Estate and Gift Tax or U.S. Taxation of International Transactions.

No other courses count toward the tax certification or the 3.000 GPA requirement.

The final requirement for the certificate program is that students complete the law school Substantial Writing requirement (2 hours) by completing a paper in the area of taxation. Certificate students may complete the Substantial Writing requirement in any of three ways:

1. Write a student note on an approved tax topic (federal or state) for the South Texas Law Review;
2. Take one of the STCL Houston seminars and write about a tax topic (currently, there are no seminars on tax, although other seminars might allow for a tax angle on the seminar topic); or
3. Write a paper on an approved tax topic under the supervision of a faculty member pursuant to the school's Supervised Research option.

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### ***Concentration in Texas Advocacy***

The law school offers a "Concentration in Texas Advocacy" certificate for qualifying students. Details of this certificate can be obtained from Vice President, Advocacy & Professor Robert Galloway.

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### ***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 such as negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Students are provided opportunities for learning about the variety of dispute resolution methods primarily through simulation courses, clinics, and internal/external advocacy competitions. For more information, visit the [Frank Evans Center](#) page or the FECCR office.

### Exchange and Study Abroad Programs

STCL Houston offers a summer study-abroad program. All classes in the study-abroad program are taught in English, have an international- or comparative-law focus, and count toward the JD degree. Grading will reflect STCL Houston's grading system. 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 (1) hour credit in excess of the total number of weeks of study. For more information, including application requirements, about study abroad programs, visit the [Study Abroad](#) page.

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### Visiting Other ABA-Approved Law Schools

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 Student Services by submitting an [Educational Records Release](#) 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 2.700 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 Student Services
- 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.

## Attendance and Participation

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 at least 80 percent of regularly scheduled classes in each course to receive course credit. Associate deans, assistant deans, 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 acknowledge a statement that they have 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.** It also may be a matter of character and fitness impacting entry into the profession.

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 Faculty or the Associate Dean of Students to drop a student from the course.

Fall & Spring Semester Absences		Summer Session Absences	
Meetings or Assigned Activities 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)

### Attendance in Courses On-Campus

For in-person meetings faculty members maintain attendance records for their courses and can, at their discretion, distribute attendance roll sheets, make use of attendance apps, or employ 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.

### Attendance in Intersession Courses and Short Form Courses

No absences are permitted.

### Attendance in Asynchronous Online Courses

For online asynchronous courses, for a student to receive attendance credit for the week, a student must complete all of that week’s assigned activities (e.g. lectures, discussions, assignments, quizzes) by the deadline set by the instructor. Unless another deadline is given by the instructor, the weekly deadline for assigned activities is Sunday (11:59 PM CST). A student who fails to complete all assigned activities by the given deadline for the week will be considered absent that week. Consistent with STCL Houston policy, students are expected to complete 100% of class activities. Failure to achieve 80% attendance in regularly scheduled class activities will result in the student being administratively dropped from the course with a “WF” and no refund of tuition, fees, or related costs. In a 14-week course, students may only miss two weekly deadlines and will be administratively dropped on the third missed weekly deadline.

### Attendance in Synchronous online courses

For online synchronous classes, faculty members maintain attendance records for their courses and can, at their discretion, employ reasonable methods for enforcing the 80 percent attendance requirement. Consistent with STCL Houston policy, students are expected to attend 100% of classes. Failure to achieve 80% attendance in 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.

### Attendance in courses that meet partly in-person and partly online

Courses that blend instruction methods follow the policy for each method. Students are required to complete or attend 80% of both online activities, and in-person activities, calculated individually. Failure to achieve 80% attendance in either online or in-person class activities will result in the student being administratively dropped from the course with a “WF” and no refund of tuition, fees, or related costs. In a 14-week course, students may only miss two weekly deadlines and will be administratively dropped on the third missed weekly deadline.

### Absences due to military leave

As pursuant to [Texas Administrative Code Rule §4.8](#), individuals called to required military service are excused for any missed classes or assignments, up to 25% of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent. Students must present to the professor the leave notice as documentation for the absence.

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### 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 Associate Dean for Faculty. This policy does not alter or extend the deadline for submission of final grades in a course.

For courses that have an asynchronous online component extension for deadlines will not be granted except in extraordinary, adequately documented circumstances such as hospitalization of a student or death of a close family member.

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.

## 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 Faculty or the Associate of Dean of Students a professor can drop any student from a course for unsatisfactory classroom performance or misconduct.

To drop a course after the last day to drop without a failing grade, students must complete an [Add/Drop/Waiver](#) form. 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.

Dropping courses may affect financial aid eligibility, specifically the student's completion rate. (Click [here](#) for the financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards.)

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### Withdrawal without Academic Prejudice

Students must submit a [Withdrawal/Exit Form](#) with written justification to Student Services **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.

**Note:** Students withdrawing from their first semester must reapply for admission.

Withdrawal without academic prejudice may affect the student's future financial aid eligibility. (Click [here](#) for the financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards)

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### *Course Audits*

STCL Houston alumni, licensed attorneys, and graduates of ABA-approved law schools can submit a [Non-Traditional Student Registration Form](#) to Student Services & Support to request to audit a course. STCL Houston alumni may 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. An auditor must receive prior approval from the instructor in order to audit required 1L and 2L courses, externships, substantial writing courses, and competition courses (i.e., Moot Court and ADR Competitions). STCL Houston students are not permitted to audit courses.

## **Final Examinations**

### *Administration of Exams*

All examinations are taken subject to these procedures and subject to the law school'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.

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### *Anonymity*

Students will receive a unique midterm and final examination number available on STANLEY each term, excluding intersessions. 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 term have been posted following the grade deadline.

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### *Timeliness*

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

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### Allowed and Prohibited Items

Allowed Items*	Prohibited Items
Laptops, webcam, microphone, extension cord, portable laptop stand. Must use Examplify when having these items with you.	Other electronic devices, such as. cell phones, pagers, iPads, tablets, calculators (unless allowed by professor), headphones
Pens, highlighters, pencils, and pencil sharpeners	Smart watches, digital watches, stop watches, fitness trackers
Wallet (or money purse), keys	Backpacks/purses, tote bags
Foam earplugs (noise cancelling devices are allowed)	Food
Eyeglasses (no eyeglass cases), contact lenses in original container (no boxes)	Alcoholic beverages
Non-alcoholic beverages	Books (Unless Open Book exam)
Tissues, cough drops, medicine, wrapped feminine hygiene products	Notes (Unless Open Notes exam)
Books and/or notes for open-book/open-notes exams ONLY	Hats, scarves, head gear (except religious items)
Sweaters or jackets	Smoking materials

\*Allowed items must remain in the student's pockets or in clear plastic bags under the student's chair when not in use or should be within view of the webcam when in use.

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### Reporting Exam Misconduct

Violations of the law school's rules concerning cheating and/or other academic misconduct regarding examinations should be immediately reported to [stcl.edu/misconductreport](http://stcl.edu/misconductreport).

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### Take Home Exams

#### Long-Duration Take-Home Exams: More than 24 hours

The basic rules and procedures for take-home exams that are 24 hours or more (i.e., students do not receive accommodations) are listed below to help guide and answer any questions you may have.

1. Be sure that you are adequately prepared for the exam beforehand, as no additional time will be given for the take-home exam.
2. You may schedule your exam to begin at a time that is convenient for you, within the time parameters allotted for the take-home exam.
3. It is up to you to pace yourself and use the time allotted for the exam. Students who strategically plan their time can pace themselves to allow for a more thoughtful, polished response, which is what many instructors expect for take-home exams.
4. Feedback from instructors indicate that they do not intend for students to spend the entire time allotted for the take-home exam without eating, sleeping, or taking breaks.
5. Students who strategically plan their time can pace themselves to allow for a more thoughtful, polished response, which is what many instructors expect for take-home exams that students have 24 hours or more to complete.

### **Short-Duration Take-Home Exams: Less than 24 hours**

STCL Houston offers extended time for take-home exams of short duration (i.e., less than 24 hours). The additional time given on short-duration take-home exams is calculated in the same manner as all other law school exams.

### **Disability Accommodations for Take-Home Exams**

STCL Houston's primary goal is to offer all students the tools necessary to succeed. **Accordingly, the accommodations process is in place to ensure that all students receiving disability accommodations are placed on a reasonably leveled playing field with the other students. STCL Houston cannot offer accommodations that provide students with an unfair advantage.** The Office of Student Support is not required to provide any other accommodations for take-home exams, given that the take-home exams are self-administered. If the student would like the law school to administer the take-home exam and the structure of the take-home exam reasonably permits doing so, the student must contact the Office of Student Support to discuss the details of the exam administration.

Accordingly, absent extenuating circumstances, STCL Houston only offers accommodations for take-home exams that are less than 24 hours. Absent extenuating circumstances, students are not offered accommodations for take-home exams that students have 24 hours or more to complete.

## **Assessment Methods**

In all first year required courses (except for Legal Research and Writing I and II, Introduction to Law Study, and Legal Skills), the Law School requires that faculty use a written final examination as the primary method for grading student academic performance. Graded mid-term examinations, graded quizzes, and other graded course-related projects may be non-anonymous and may account for up to 25% of the total grade in the course. The 25% limit applies to all assessments that are outside the final exam (including both anonymous and non-anonymous assessments), whether they are in the form of a graded assessment or of a grade deduction.

In upper-level required doctrinal courses (Evidence, Federal Income Taxation, First Amendment Law, and Professional Responsibility) and in courses for students on Academic Supervision, faculty may use graded mid-term examinations, graded quizzes, and other course-related projects in addition to the written final examination. Activities other than the final exam may be non-anonymous and may account for up to 1/3 of the total grade in the course. The 1/3 limit applies to all assessments that are outside the final exam (including both anonymous and non-anonymous assessments), whether they are in the form of a graded assessment or of a grade deduction.

### **Other courses:**

In all other elective courses, seminars, and skills courses, faculty may employ any of the following alternative methods for grading 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 experiential learning (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.

## Final Examination Reschedules And Deferred Final Examinations

Contact Student Services with questions regarding the meaning or application of these rules. Faculty members do not grant permission to reschedule or defer a final examination. **ANY REQUEST FOR OR DISCLOSURE OF FINAL EXAMINATION RESCHEDULE/DEFERRAL INFORMATION TO A FACULTY MEMBER OR STUDENT MAY JEOPARDIZE ANONYMITY AND IS A VIOLATION OF THE HONOR CODE.**

**STUDENTS MUST NOT DISCUSS ANY FINAL EXAMINATION INFORMATION WITH ANY OTHER STUDENTS OR DISCUSS OR POST ANY FINAL EXAMINATION INFORMATION IN PUBLIC OR ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN ANY WAY. DOING SO IS A VIOLATION OF THE HONOR CODE AND WILL BE PENALIZED ACCORDINGLY.**

Requests to reschedule or defer a final examination are considered for (i) conflict(s) or (ii) extenuating circumstances. Submit all requests using the [Final Exam Reschedule form](#) or the [Deferral Request](#) form with proper supporting documentation, where applicable.

### (1) Final Examination Conflicts (Reschedule Only)

Final examination conflict reschedule requests will be approved, based on the following circumstances:

- Three final exams in a row within a 24-hour period.
  - Examples:
    - One examination in the morning at 10:00, one in the evening at 6:00, and one the following morning at 10:00; or
    - One examination in the evening at 6:00, one the following morning at 10:00, and one in the evening at 6:00 (or on Saturday only at 4:00).
    - If a student has an examination at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the same day, and the first examination is delayed so that the student has three hours or less between exams, the student can (but is not required to) reschedule or defer the later examination.
    - When removing an incomplete grade (“I”) for a deferred final examination conflicts with a current semester’s exam.
    - A religious observance, such as Sabbath or Ramadan.

Final examination conflict reschedule requests will only be considered if received by the Monday following the second week of classes for fall and spring and the Monday following the first week of classes for summer.

Final exam reschedule request deadlines maybe found under [Important Dates](#).

### (2) Extenuating Circumstances (Reschedule or Deferral)

If a student has an examination at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the same day, and the first examination is delayed so that the student has three hours or less between exams, the student can (but is not required to) reschedule or defer the later examination.

Requests due to extenuating circumstances will only be considered if received before the final examination start time and must include proper documentation to support the following:\*

- Physical inability, including illness or a medical situation which prevents the student from taking an exam;
- A religious ceremony that precludes a student from taking an exam until after the final examination period;
- A student is to attend a wedding, graduation, or other special ceremony of an immediate family member, and the student could not have known before the last day to drop a course that the examination and event were in conflict;

- A member of a student's immediate family becomes critically ill during the final examination period and before the student's next exam has started;
- Death of a member of the student's immediate family; or
- The birth of a student's child.

\*If a student or a student's immediate family member becomes ill **during** a final and is unable to complete their exam, they must speak directly with Student Services **before** completing the exam if they wish to reschedule or defer.

Examples of proper documentation for extenuating circumstances include:

- Physician's written certification;
- Note from a hospital or doctor;
- Death Certificate;
- Published obituary notice;
- Original note from funeral home clearly indicating the student's relationship to the deceased; and
- Ceremony invitation confirming date and time of conflicting event(s), along with correspondence that confirms that notice of the event was received after the last day to drop classes without a failing grade.

A final examination will not be rescheduled/deferred due to the following circumstances (non-inclusive):

- Requests to reschedule/defer a take-home exam.
- Two final examinations scheduled on the same day or consecutive days.
- Two final examinations scheduled less than 24 hours apart.
- Travel or vacation plans during the final examination period.
- A student having a professional opportunity that conflicts with scheduled final examinations, except in the case of a student employed full-time.
- A student late for an exam due to oversleeping, traffic, and all similar circumstances. The student will be allowed to sit for the final examination in the time remaining. Extra time will not be provided when starting a final examination late.
- Illnesses that are not incapacitating and/or not supported with proper documentation.
- A student wishing to leave early for the winter or summer break.
- A student approved for a final examination reschedule/deferral in a previous semester/session for the same reasons as indicated on the student's new request (excludes requests for final examination conflict reschedule).

If a request is denied and the student does not sit for the regularly scheduled final examination, the student will receive a withdraw-failing grade, a "WF" will be entered on their permanent record, and the "WF" will be counted in computing the student's grade point average.

### ***Taking a Reschedule/Deferred Final Examination***

A student's rescheduled final examination will be administered on one of the next two available dates during the final examination period and to a date on which the final will not again be subject to reschedule under the conditions outlined above. Exams cannot be taken earlier than the originally scheduled day. In the case where the reschedule is requested on the last day of exams, the examination will be rescheduled to the next business day following the end of the examination period.

A student approved to defer their final examination will have an incomplete grade ("I") entered on their transcript until the final examination is taken and graded. All deferred final examinations must be taken during the next semester in which a student is registered, and the course is offered, unless otherwise approved by the Office of Student Support or Associate Dean of Students. Students must sign up to remove their incomplete grade during registration and are expected to attend class sessions. If a student is unable to

attend class sessions, they must make arrangements with the professor in advance. Students attending class under this provision are not auditors.

If an incomplete grade is on the transcript for one academic year without removal, the incomplete grade will be replaced with a withdraw-failing grade (“WF”) on the student’s permanent record, which will be counted in computing the student’s grade point average.

## Grades

### Grading System

The law school uses the alphabetical system of grading for most courses, with the exception of some experiential learning, 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	High Pass
P	Pass
LP	Low Pass
U	Unacceptable (Fail)
W	Withdraw – Course dropped without prejudice
I	Incomplete
WF / WU	Withdraw Failing (standard letter-graded) /
Course dropped administratively or after drop date or non--timely removal of Incomplete	Withdraw Unacceptable (pass/fail)

### 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" or "WU" is received.

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### 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

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### Mandatory Grading Curves for Other Courses

All Legal Research and Writing (LRW) classes must have a mean GPA between 2.80-3.20. The mandatory curve will apply to the professor's entire cohort of students being graded in LRW, meaning if the professor has two sections of LRW that semester, which often occurs, the curve will be applied to the entire two sections, not each section individually.

All upper level required courses or courses with enrollment 25 or more must have a mean GPA between 2.70-3.30.

In making the GPA calculation for any mandatory grading curve, any WF for incomplete performance is not included in the calculation. Any F given for failed performance is included in the calculation.

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### Retaking Required Courses

A student can retake a course only if they 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, listed below. It is generally in the student's best interest to repeat a failed course as soon as practicable. Grades of "F", "WF" are not removed from a transcript or substituted by a retaken course and are used in GPA calculation.

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### 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.

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### **Grade Deadline**

Grades for the fall intersession and fall full-term are due to Student Services & Support no later than 22 days following the last day of fall exams for 1<sup>st</sup> year courses and no later than 28 days for upper-level courses. Grades for the spring intersession, spring full-term, and summer session are due 28 days following the last day of spring and summer exams.

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### **Grading Notifications**

All available grades will be made available the day following the grade deadline. Student Services will not provide grades to students via email, over the telephone, or in person.

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### **Review of Grades**

After a grade is posted, a faculty member can, in their 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 either the Grades and Calendar Committee by unanimous vote or 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. If an error described above has occurred, and the professor proposes that more than one grade be changed as a result, all grades affected by that error must be changed as necessary to correct the error, so that all grades as finally submitted are consistent with the correction, regardless of whether correcting the error results in an increase or decrease in grades originally submitted by the professor. If a grade change is made under this policy with respect to a first-year course, the rules and procedures with respect to the mandatory grading curve for first-year courses are applicable to the grades as finally submitted for that course.

A student has a right to review their 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 next semester begins, 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.

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### **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 Student Services. The "Incomplete" will be changed to a "WF" (for a standard letter-graded course) or a "WU" (for a pass/fail course) 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" or a "WU."

Receiving an incomplete grade, "WF," or a "WU" will affect the student's future financial aid eligibility. ([Click here for the financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards](#))

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### ***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>Student Services Department 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. Recent graduates can view/print [class rank via STANLEY](#).

## **Honors and Recognition Programs**

### ***Dean's Honor List***

A student is eligible for inclusion on the Dean's Honor List if they earn 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.

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### ***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 permanent URL virtual award link to add to their online resumes and biographies.

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### ***Law Fraternities***

There are several law fraternities at South Texas College of Law Houston. For more information, please visit the [Fraternities](#) page.

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### ***Order of the Lytae***

An honorary fraternity, the Order of the Lytae recognizes outstanding academic achievement. A student must have completed at least 45 hours of law studies at STCL 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. The Order of the Lytae is noted on the transcript.

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### ***Pro Bono Honors Program***

The STCL 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 law school-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 for 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 STCL Houston for graduation. There is one ceremony in May for the spring and summer graduating classes and one ceremony in December for the fall graduating class.

- May Graduates: Students who complete their graduation requirements by the end of the spring semester.
  - **Note:** Students who complete their degree requirements by the end of the spring intersession will be considered a May graduate.
- July Graduates: Students who complete their graduation requirements by the end of the summer session.
- December Graduates: Students who complete their graduation requirements by the end of the fall semester.
  - **Note:** Students who complete their degree requirements by the end of the fall intersession will be considered a December graduate.

### Requirements & Procedures

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

- Submit a formal application for graduation on [STANLEY \(see the Student Self-Service section\)](#).
- Pay all fees and tuition charges incurred before graduation.
- Participate in commencement, unless permission to graduate in absentia is granted by the Assistant Dean of Student Services. This can be requested by submitting the [Graduation in Absentia](#) to Student Services.

### 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 Standing and Academic Deficiency Policy

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

To be eligible to continue at STCL Houston in good standing, a student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.300 or above at the completion of each term.

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### **Academic Risk, Dismissal, and Probation**

#### **Academic Risk Status**

For students who began before Fall 2025: Any student who fails to achieve a 2.400 cumulative GPA after their first long semester will be considered Academic Risk. Students will be required to schedule an appointment to meet with the Assistant Dean of Academic Success. Students will also be required to enroll in and receive a passing grade in Legal Skills the following long semester. For students who began in Spring 2025 and thereafter: Any student who fails to achieve a 2.700 cumulative GPA after their first long semester will be considered Academic Risk. These students will be required to schedule an appointment with the Assistant Dean of Academic Success. Students will also be required to enroll in and receive a passing grade in Legal Skills the following long semester. Student Services will administratively drop any student determined to be at-risk following the spring semester from any summer session courses in which they are enrolled.

Academic at-risk students will be placed in a financial aid warning status. (Click [here](#) for the financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards.)

#### **Early Dismissal Rule**

For students who began in Spring 2025 and thereafter, any full-time student who fails to achieve a cumulative 2.000 GPA after their first semester, or any part-time student who fails to achieve a cumulative 2.000 GPA after their second semester, will be immediately dismissed for academic deficiency.

#### **First-Year Dismissal Rule**

For students who began before Fall 2025: Any full-time or part-time student who fails to achieve at least a cumulative 2.300 GPA after their first two long semesters will be immediately dismissed for academic deficiency.

For students who began in Fall 2025 or later: Any full-time student who fails to achieve at least a cumulative 2.300 GPA after their first two long semesters will be immediately dismissed for academic deficiency. Any part-time student who fails to achieve at least a cumulative 2.300 GPA after their first three enrollment periods (i.e., the fall semester, spring semester, and summer session) will be immediately dismissed for academic deficiency.

#### **Probationary Rule**

Any student whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.300 in any term (fall, spring, or summer) after the period covered by the First-Year Dismissal Rule will not be immediately dismissed but will be given the remainder of their current enrollment period (or, if the student is not currently enrolled, one succeeding probationary enrollment period) to attain a cumulative GPA of 2.300. During their probationary semester, these students must participate in academic and course counseling with members of the Academic Success and/or the Bar Readiness department. 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 students will be placed in a financial aid warning status. (Click [here](#) for the financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards.)

#### **Probationary Final Dismissal Rule**

Any student who successfully raises their 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.

### Consequences of Dismissal

A student dismissed for academic deficiency under any of the above dismissal rules 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 law school under circumstances that require student status. No appeals from academic dismissal are permitted, but dismissed students may reapply for admission consistent with “Readmission Policy” below.

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### *Extracurricular Activities and Academic Deficiency*

A student on academic probation (GPA below 2.300) 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 their term in office, they 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 CURRENTS: Journal of International Economic Law. Students who fail to meet academic requirements will be administratively dismissed from participation in these programs.
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### *Readmission Policy*

For students who began before Spring 2025: An academically dismissed student may apply for readmission to STCL Houston only after at least two years have passed since the effective date of the dismissal.

For students who began in Spring 2025 or later: A student who began in Spring 2025 or later who is academically dismissed with a GPA of 2.150 or above at the time of dismissal may apply for readmission only after at least one year has passed since the effective date of the dismissal. All other students may apply for readmission to STCL Houston only after at least two years have passed since the effective date of the dismissal.

No academically dismissed student has a right to be readmitted. A student who has been dismissed for academic deficiency will be considered for readmission only as a beginning student. 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 success in the study of law.

Students readmitted may not be eligible for federal or state financial aid and should schedule an appointment with a member of Student Services to discuss other aid options.

## **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 results in cancellation of all course registration.

**The law school does not distribute or mail invoices.** Student account balances and billing information is available via STANLEY. Payment deadlines are posted online in the [Important Dates](#) calendar for the academic year.

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### ***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 (1) credit hour in a course with no classroom component (Law Review, Moot Court, Mock Trial, Mock Trial Challenge, Corporate Counsel Review, or CURRENTS: 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 (7) or fewer hours to graduate will be charged tuition on a per credit hour basis, plus fees.

#### **Visiting Students and Graduate Audit Status**

Students enrolled as visiting students or auditors must pay all tuition and fees **in full** at the time of registration.

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### ***Methods of Payment***

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

Payments may be submitted via STANLEY:

- Credit Card-Online only
- Wire transfers-Online only
- 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. Credit card payments cannot be made in person.

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 checks returned. The act of cancelling 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 registration.

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### Deferred Tuition Payment Option

Under the Deferred Tuition Payment plan:

1. Fifty percent of tuition and a \$500 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 5 p.m. on the date specified in the tuition and fee schedule.
3. 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.

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### 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. The college does not prohibit attendance or impose penalties while waiting on VA Payments, per 38 U.S.C. § 3679(e)(1), or any other forms of guaranteed tuition payment (such as approved alternative loans, 529 savings plans, or other financing options).

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### 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 nonrefundable. 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 law school as a result of dropping or withdrawing from courses. Students receiving Title IV aid are encouraged to meet with a member of student services before dropping courses.

Fall and Spring Semesters	
<u>All courses dropped</u>	<u>Percent Tuition Refunded</u>
Before first day of classes	100% (including fees)
After registration and through the first week of classes	80%
During second week of classes	60%
During third week of classes	40%
During fourth week of classes	20%
After fourth week of classes	0%

## Summer Session

<u>All courses dropped</u>	<u>Percent Tuition Refunded</u>
Before first day of classes	100% (including fees)
After registration and through the first week of classes	100%
During second week of classes	50%
After second week of classes	0%

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### Intersessions

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

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### Accounting Services Office Approvals

A student's account must be paid in full, including tuition, fees, returned checks, and delinquent library books before the law school can honor a request for a letter of 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 to another law school must submit an Educational Records Release to obtain a Letter of Standing, along with the required \$35 transfer application fee **per transfer letter**. Cashier's check, money order, or cash payment will be necessary to ensure immediate release of this information. Letters of Standing will be issued only to students who have cleared their accounts with the Accounting Services Office.

Students who are delinquent in their financial obligations are not permitted to attend classes until payment is made, and a hold will be placed on their accounts. Further, delinquent balances will be turned over to a collection agency.

## Financial Aid

Student Financial Services administers and processes student loans, scholarships, grants, and Federal Work Study funds. Once accepted, loan and grant funds are automatically applied to your account. Resulting credit balances due from the law school 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 applied, pay the remaining balance in full or your account will be subject to the deferred payment deadline with respect to the shortfall.

Book vouchers are available to those students with federal direct loans to purchase their class materials. Students must agree to the authorization of their financial aid funds for bookstore purchases within their self-service portal, located in Stanley. Once the student elects to authorize financial aid funds for bookstore purchases, their election remains in effect for the duration of their enrollment at STCLH. Once they opted in, students are not required to utilize the book voucher option every term. Students must notify Student Services if they wish to change their book voucher election.

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

## 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	
Regular Filing Fee	\$190
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 Texas Board of Law Examiners typically administers a combined multistate and essay examination at various locations throughout Texas each year in February and July. 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.

Fees pertaining to the Texas Bar Examination may be found [here](#).

Bar Examination Filing Periods			
<u>Examination Date</u>	<u>Registration Opens</u>	<u>Timely Deadline</u>	<u>Absolute Deadline (late fee)</u>
February	June 30	September 1	November 1
July	December 4	February 1	April 1

### *Inquiries to Texas 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 [Board of Law Examiners website](#). Information about exam requirements and components is available at <https://ble.texas.gov/current-exam>.

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### ***Bar Examination 86-hour Rule***

The rules governing admission to the State Bar of Texas permit a person to sit for the bar exam if they have 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 their 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, they 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 law school does not request early grades. Student Services 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.
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### ***Completion Date for Seminars and Clinics/Externships in Final Semester***

Students taking seminars or clinics/externships in their final semester are required to complete their coursework by the end of the final examination period. The student gets an “I” until the work is completed, and if the work is not completed within one week from the end of the final examination period, the student will not be certified to sit for the upcoming bar exam but will have to wait until the bar exam is offered again.

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### ***Supervised Practice Card***

Texas state law permits qualified law students and qualified unlicensed law school graduates to apply for a supervised practice card, which allows them to provide legal services under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

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

- Completed at least two-thirds (60) of the credit hours required for graduation, OR
- Completed at least one-third (30) of the credit hours required for graduation AND is currently enrolled in a clinical program for which a supervised practice card is required.

Each student must certify that the student 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 Supervised Practice 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.

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### ***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](http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre).

## Student Complaints and Appeals Process

### *General Complaints*

If a student has a complaint that the student believes needs attention, submit an online report [here](#). A personal or written response will be made as soon as the matter has been investigated. Student suggestions for a possible solution are welcome. Anonymous complaints generally are not complete enough to be addressed because there is no way to obtain additional information to facilitate an investigation. Accordingly, action is seldom taken on anonymous letters.

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### *Academic Appeals*

If, after having consulted with the appropriate assistant and or associate dean, an academic complaint has not been handled to the student's satisfaction, the student may solicit the assistance of the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee, but only if the matter falls within its jurisdiction.

The Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee has the right to grant an appeal, consider, and make a determination for the following:

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. Nothing contained in this statement of jurisdiction is a grant of authority to the committee to revise or deviate from any published standard without the prior approval of the faculty. The student or any faculty member may appeal to the full faculty if two or more members of the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee dissented from the determination.

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### *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/](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 or their 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 their 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.

## **General Policies and Disclosures**

### *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 law school. 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.”

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### ***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 law school 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.

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### ***Acceptable Facility Use***

The law school’s property, premises, and facilities (collectively “facilities”) are made available to students and others as a resource and a privilege. Students and all persons utilizing law school facilities, including but not limited to students utilizing law school facilities for purposes of bar preparation services, shall be responsible for ensuring that the facilities remain in good working condition and are left in the same condition in which students and those using the facilities find them, including furniture, IT and other items. Specific areas designated by the law school may be reserved by an individual or a student group for a specific event or meeting in accordance with the applicable policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Student Organizations Handbook, the Building Use Policy, the Free Speech Policy, The Fred Parks Law Library Policies, and the Student, Staff and Faculty Handbooks (the “Policies” for purposes of the Acceptable Facility Use).

In addition to all other policies and procedures, facility use shall be restricted as follows:

1. Individuals will not be permitted to remain in any law school facilities outside of the law school’s designated building hours. This includes remaining in law school facilities overnight.
2. Areas of ingress and egress must remain open and un-obstructed at all times, including but not limited to doorways, hallways, restrooms, lobbies, security vestibules, elevators, stairwells, entrances, and exits. This includes law school-owned parking areas. Atria, foyers, and patios shall remain open and un-obstructed unless reserved for an approved event pursuant to the law school’s policies and procedures, including the Building Use Policy and the Student Organizations Handbook.
3. Signs, flyers, banners or similar materials are not permitted to be affixed to law school walls, windows, or property with the exception of the bulletin boards provided for student postings (subject to the requirements of the Student Organizations Handbook) or in The Fred Parks Law Library (consistent with the Library’s policies). With the exception of The Fred Parks Law Library, study aids or similar instructional materials in designated study rooms are permitted as long as they do not damage the walls or furniture. Under no circumstances shall students or others be permitted to make permanent changes or otherwise damage any law school facilities.
4. All operational and instructional spaces are reserved for their intended purpose. This includes faculty and staff offices, classrooms, court rooms, auditoriums, conference and meeting rooms, break rooms, and similar areas in use for operational or instructional activities, as well as The Fred Parks Law Library (subject to the requirements of The Fred Parks Law Library Policies). Subject to the Policies, disruptions of the law school’s operational or instructional activities will not be permitted and may result in the removal of the responsible parties from the law school’s facilities and other disciplinary consequences.

5. All individuals (including but not limited to those invited by students, student organizations, faculty, or staff) within the law school may be requested to provide identification by administrative or security personnel at any time. Individuals who refuse, or who are unable, to provide identification may be asked to leave the law school's facilities. Individuals who are not students, staff, faculty, authorized alumni, preregistered library visitors, authorized vendors performing work on behalf of the law school, authorized guests, or participants in a specific meeting or event authorized by the law school's policies and procedures may be asked to leave the law school's facilities at any time for any reason. The failure to comply with requests to leave the facility may result in removal by security or referral to law enforcement.
6. Law school security personnel reserve the right to search and inspect all persons, bags, and packages that enter law school facilities. Except in emergency circumstances, security personnel will request the individual to remove any prohibited items prior to the search.
7. Members of the public may have access to The Fred Parks Law Library subject to the requirements of The Fred Parks Law Library Policies. Members of the public must remain in the library and are not authorized to enter any other part of the law school's facilities.
8. Use of law school facilities shall be subject to all law school policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the Student, Staff and Faculty Handbooks, the Student Organizations Handbook, the Free Speech Policy, The Fred Parks Law Library Policies, the Student Code of Conduct, the Weapons Policy, the Drug and Alcohol Policy, and the Building Use Policy, all of which are incorporated by reference.
9. Students are prohibited from bringing the following items into law school facilities unless specifically authorized as indicated in this subsection. Students in need of disability accommodations or accessibility services must contact the Student Support Department ([studentsupport@stcl.edu](mailto:studentsupport@stcl.edu)). Students are responsible for any damage to the facilities from the use of items brought on campus:
  - a. Household appliances including but not limited to TVs, microwaves, coffee makers, toasters or small ovens, refrigerators, hot or warming plates, or other appliances for cooking or food/drink preparation. Student events involving food or drinks must receive prior written approval from the Office of Student Engagement and comply with applicable policies for events.
  - b. Animals, with the exception of authorized service animals. Student events involving animals must receive prior written approval from the Office of Student Engagement.
  - c. Furniture or bedding including but not limited to mattresses, couches, tables, chairs, futons, sleeping pads, or sleeping bags.
  - d. Any item that causes damage to law school facilities, or creates a potential unsafe or unsanitary condition, including but not limited to candles and similar items that constitute fire hazards, or items that attract insects or similar pests.
  - e. Any item which would constitute a criminal offense to possess or distribute at a higher education facility.
  - f. Items otherwise prohibited by law school policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Weapons Policy and the Drug and Alcohol Policy.
10. In addition to potential removal by security or referral to law enforcement, the failure to follow any of these restrictions may be considered a violation of the law school's Student Code of Conduct and subject to discipline.

### I. 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 their 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.

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.

- e) The Code and its processes shall 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 nonacademic 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 .

### 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 Office of Student Support 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 law school.
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 their 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 their own work, or any portion of their 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 they are 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 them.
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, rescheduling 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, printer or any 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 their 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 them or 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 faculty, staff, and security personnel 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.

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

In addition to the misconduct governed by the law school's [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination](#) 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 a class that are relevant to the subject being taught, and are in compliance with the law school's Free Speech Policy incorporated herein by reference. 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, or any other form of written or verbal conduct that is directed toward or that is about a student, a group of students, faculty, staff, or any type of employee or stakeholder of the law school. Such conduct may include on or off-campus conduct to the extent it impacts the stakeholder's access to and ability to benefit from the educational program or environment.
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.

4. A student shall not retaliate against another for participating in a STCLH investigation or discipline proceeding at any level.

#### *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 facilities and fixtures, furniture, computers, technology or software owned or provided 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.
3. Violations of the Acceptable Facility Use Policy, incorporated herein by reference.

#### *C. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs*

A student violates this Code by engaging in conduct involving alcohol or illegal drugs, as defined in the law school's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy, 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](#), [Drug Abuse Prevention Policy](#), and [Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy](#), 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 as defined by the law school's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy 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 or controlled substances 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*

A student who engages in conduct that violates the law school's [Weapons Policy](#) violates the Code by that conduct.

#### *E. Off-Campus Misconduct*

*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 if the conduct impacts the ability of a member of the law school community from participating in or receiving the benefit of the law school's educational program or environment.*

#### *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, staff, or security personnel. 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.
3. Lying to any law school administrator or faculty in the course of an investigation or discipline process will violate the Code.
4. A student is expected to cooperate truthfully and in good faith in all STCLH investigations and disciplinary proceedings. The discipline proceeding will continue regardless of the student's cooperation unless otherwise dismissed by the law school.

### **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 Student Support 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 they believe constitutes misconduct under the Code shall report such facts in writing by filing a report [here](#). The Associate Dean of Students, or designee, may initiate a report on behalf of the law school. 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 facts they believe constitutes violations of the law school policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy should file a report [here](#) or contact the [Title IX Coordinator](#). This includes allegations of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on a legally protected class which are addressed in the law school's [Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy](#). Protected classes include race and ethnicity, age, religion, disability, national origin, and sex as defined under Title IX including sex, gender, pregnancy and related conditions, gender expression, sexual orientation, and any other legally protected status.

#### *B. Review of the Report; Issuance of a Complaint*

Upon receipt of a report of misconduct, the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs shall review the report.

- i. All reports alleging violations of the law school's [Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy](#) shall be referred to the Title IX Coordinator and addressed pursuant to the Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy. Allegations dismissed under the [Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy](#) may still constitute violations of the Code and subject to discipline.
- ii. For all other misconduct reports, the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs may review any other materials or make inquiry of any person believed to have information concerning the report.

Within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the initial report, the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs shall consult with the Associate Dean of Students and make a finding as to whether or not good cause exists to proceed with the discipline process. This deadline may be extended at the law school's discretion if extenuating circumstances require additional time to complete the review. If the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs (with approval of the Associate Dean for Students) finds there is no good reason to proceed, then no further action shall be taken on the report.

If the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean of Students find 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") as set forth in below, which shall hear and determine the matter. Good reason to proceed may consider applicable aggravating or mitigating factors such as: (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; (9) prior discipline history; (10) the impact of a student's disability if any; and (11) nexus of offense to professional standards. If the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean of Students disagree as to good cause, the report will be referred to the Committee Chair who will determine whether the matter shall be referred to the Committee.

#### *C. Emergency Removal and Interim Action*

The Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs or their designee, in consultation with the law school's multidisciplinary CARE Team and the Associate Dean of Students, may determine that a student's continuing presence poses a significant danger to themselves, other persons, or property, or a significant threat of disrupting the academic process. The Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs or their designee may take immediate interim disciplinary action including suspension or restriction of access from law school facilities and programs as appropriate. As part of the interim discipline, the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs may impose additional conditions on the student's return to law school facilities and programs as may be necessary to the safety issue identified.

The student shall receive written notice of any interim disciplinary action within three (3) business day of the interim action. If interim action is taken, a hearing or other process shall be scheduled as soon as possible thereafter.

#### *D. Summary Procedure*

At any point in the discipline process, a student may admit that they have committed the violation of the Code and request that the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs impose sanctions. In such an event, the Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs, with approval of the Associate Dean of Students, may impose any reasonable sanction provided for in this Handbook, 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. Once a matter has been referred to the Committee, Summary Procedures shall be at the Committee's discretion.

#### *E. Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee to Hear the Complaint*

If there is good reason to proceed on the report, a Complaint is issued against the student, and 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 below.

#### *F. Rights of the Student(s) Named in Complaint*

The Committee may find the student(s) to have committed 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, except where confidentiality is legally required.
3. The opportunity at the hearing to present relevant evidence on 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 or a non-attorney advocate appear with the student in the proceedings. The sole function of such counsel or advocate shall be (i) to be present, (ii) to give advice to the student concerning what they should or should not say, and (iii) to summarize the case for the student in an opening and 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. The student must notify the Chairperson in writing at least 72 hours prior to the start of the hearing if the student intends to have counsel or advocate

participate in the proceeding. Failure to comply with this prior notice may result in the exclusion of the counsel or advocate, or rescheduling the proceeding at the Committee's sole discretion.

6. The right to defer during the hearing for no longer than one hour any statement the student wishes to make at any point until the subject student has consulted with the counsel or advocate, if any, representing the student.

#### *G. 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.

After all evidence and closing statements have been presented, the Committee will deliberate outside of the presence of all non-Committee members. At the Committee's discretion, the Committee may have legal counsel for the law school present in the hearing and deliberations to advise the Committee on legal matters.

The Committee's finding that a student has or has not committed a violation and whether a sanction is warranted shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. In determining whether a violation occurred or 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; (9) prior discipline history; (10) the impact of a student's disability if any; and (11) nexus of offense to professional standards.

#### *H. Standard of Proof; Determination of a Violation by the Student(s)*

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. 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.
- Following the Dean's review, the Committee shall notify the student of the outcome no later than ten (10) business days after the Committee's decision. Discipline shall go into effect immediately upon the Committee's notification of the student of the outcome.
- The Chairperson shall provide the student with a concise statement of the Committee's conclusions no later than fourteen (14) business days following the Committee's decision. Such statement (without personally identifiable information of the student) may, at the Dean's discretion, be provided to the whole faculty and published appropriately to the student body.

#### *I. 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"):

- a) Private Oral Reprimand, which shall consist of notification to the student of a finding that they have 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 they have 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). Suspension shall include exclusion from all law school facilities, programs and services for the period of the suspension. A record of such suspension shall be made a part of the student's permanent law school record.
  - f) 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 their legal studies at the law school. Suspension shall include exclusion from all law school facilities, programs and services for the period of the suspension. A record of such suspension shall be made a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
  - g) 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. Expulsion shall include exclusion from all law school facilities, programs and services. A record of such expulsion shall be made a part of the respondent's permanent law school record.
2. 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 their 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.
3. 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.

#### *J. Appeal*

The student subject to sanction by the Committee may appeal the decision to the Dean of the law school by notifying the Dean in writing within seven (7) days of the Committee issuing its concise statement of the Committee's conclusions. The student's written appeal must include the reasons for the appeal which shall be limited to:

1. A procedural error or omission occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, failure to correctly apply the evidentiary standard).
2. To consider new evidence, unknown or unavailable during the investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.
3. The sanctions imposed fall outside the range of sanctions the law school has designated for this offense and the cumulative record of the Respondent.

The Dean shall notify the student in writing as to the outcome of the appeal. The Dean's decision shall be final and not appealable. Disciplinary sanctions shall not be tolled during the course of the appeal.

#### *K. 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 their official capacity;
2. In any judicial, administrative, or other legal proceedings where such information would be relevant and reasonably necessary to defend the interests of the law school or any employee of the law school in their official capacity; or
3. For administrative purposes in order to support the discipline process.

(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 law school further desires events to be enjoyable and conducted in a comfortable environment for all participants, but that they not in any way detract from or impair the law school's mission as a serious institution of higher education. To this end, the law school 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 law school, and all visitors to the law school. The term "the law school" when used to identify a location includes the law school'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 law school's property at any event.
2. The law school'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 law school'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 law school employee (*for law school 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 law school'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 law school'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 law school be allowed to serve alcoholic beverages.

6. At all events on the law school'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 law school events which requires among other things that no reference to service of alcoholic beverages of any kind may be made.
8. The law school reserves the right at any time to limit the amount of alcohol served at any event.
9. The law school reserves the right to prevent individuals who appear intoxicated from entering or leaving the law school, 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 law school 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 law school 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 law school's facilities, suspension of privileges to consume alcohol at future events, and other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by law school 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 law school 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 law school with an open container(s) of an alcoholic beverage.
4. Security shall have the authority to terminate any consumption of alcoholic beverages in the law school's foyer if students and/or their guests become uncooperative or violate this policy.

#### B. Off-Campus Events

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 Dean’s designee, shall have the authority to grant exceptions to this policy (*Policy No. 4-2, Revision No. 3*).

**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 Property Services in a timely manner. If alcohol is to be served at any event on the law school’s property, full compliance with the Alcohol Service Policy is required. That policy requires, among other things, that the sponsor submit to the Office of Student Engagement 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 Office of Student Engagement (Room 234).

**Signs**

All signs for student-hosted events must be approved by the Office of Student Engagement. Signs must show the sponsor, date, time, location and purpose or description of the event. All other information is optional. No reference to the 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 Office of Student Engagement (Room 234C). Approved signs may be placed on the bulletin boards 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 Office of Student Engagement (Room 234) 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, currently, Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs at studentsupport@stcl.edu 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 their designee.”

5. The use of illegal drugs on campus is contrary to the policy of the law school and is hereby prohibited.
6. Any person violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, conducted in accordance with the law school's disciplinary process as detailed in "Process B" of the [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Nondiscrimination, and Nonacademic Misconduct Policy](http://www.stcl.edu/stanley/pdf/Title-IX-Policy.pdf), available at <http://www.stcl.edu/stanley/pdf/Title-IX-Policy.pdf>.

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, 255T, 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 their designee." During any times that there is no Drug Officer appointed, the term shall mean the Dean or their 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 their 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 their designee shall determine if there are reasonable grounds to believe there was a violation of the policy. If the Drug Officer or their designee believes there is a violation of the policy, they 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 their designee still believes there is violation of the policy, they 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 their 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 their designee may take immediate interim disciplinary action including suspension. No such action may be taken until the Drug Officer, or their 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 from 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 is filed. The Drug Officer shall notify the student in writing of the time, date and place of the hearing.
2. The law school shall be represented by the Drug Officer or their designee.
3. The Drug Officer shall provide 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 counseled 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 law school uses an attorney other than the Drug Officer to present its case.
9. The law school 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.

#### **VII. 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.

### **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 law school 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 law school property, or while representing the law school, or while participating in law school activities whether on or off law school 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 (ext. 1828, 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.

#### **Law School 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 law school of any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off law school premises while conducting law school business, or while representing the law school, 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 law school 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 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 law school 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 Student Affairs and to employees from the Director of Human Resources.

The Office of Human Resources and the Office of Student Support 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*

**The Menninger Clinic**

*12301 Main Street*

*Houston, TX 77035*

*713-275-5400*

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 Leadership and Empowerment 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 the South Texas College of Law Houston President and Dean at [president@stcl.edu](mailto:president@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](mailto: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:

Dr. Donna Davis  
Assistant Dean of Leadership and Empowerment and Title IX Coordinator  
South Texas College of Law Houston  
1303 San Jacinto, Suite 321  
Houston, Texas 77002-7006  
Phone: (713) 646-2977  
Email: [TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu)

Gena Singleton  
ADA/ Section 504 Coordinator  
Assistant Dean of Student Academic Affairs  
South Texas College of Law Houston  
1303 San Jacinto, Room 255  
Houston, Texas 77002-7006

Phone: 713-646-1778  
Email: [gsingleton@stcl.edu](mailto:gsingleton@stcl.edu)

**Inquiries may be made externally to:**

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

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)  
U.S. Department of Education  
1999 Bryan St. Suite 1620  
Dallas, Texas 75201-6810  
Phone: (214) 661-9600  
[OCR.Dallas@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Dallas@ed.gov)

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

Title IX/ADA 504 Coordinator  
Office of Institutional Compliance  
South Texas College of Law Houston  
1303 San Jacinto, Room  
Houston, Texas 77002-7006  
Email: [TitleIXCoordinator@stcl.edu](mailto: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 are 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 they have 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 require 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 their identity to the accused, the law school 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 school's 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 Policy

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to assist South Texas College of Law Houston (“the law school”) in maintaining an environment that is safe and free of violence for all employees, students, and visitors.

### **Policy**

The law school’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 of the law school or in any vehicle owned by the law school. Violation of the foregoing constitutes a third-degree felony even if the offending party is licensed under Texas’ handgun licensing law. This applies to all law school constituents, whether student, faculty, staff, vendor, applicant or any other category of visitor.

An individual who is a designated security staff member, law enforcement officer, government agent, or private security, 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 or rules of the group by which the individual is employed shall be excepted from this policy. Uniformed officers may open carry in all common areas while on campus but will conceal carry inside all classrooms. Concealed carry is also mandatory for any non-uniformed officers as well. For the purpose of this policy, uniform is defined as the day-to-day assigned clothing with a badge and identification clearly displayed.

Items other than listed above that are commonly used for self-defense are permitted on campus; however, use of any such item for a purpose other than self-defense is a violation of this policy.

The law school prohibits employees from placing personal locks on law school property. The law school reserves the right to conduct a search of an employee, student, visitor, an employee’s work area, or an employee’s, student’s, or visitor’s personal items to determine whether or not a weapon prohibited by the policy is present. Such a search includes, but is not limited to, a visual inspection, a physical search, and/or the use of a metal detector. Failure to comply with the law school’s request to conduct a search as specified above will result in appropriate disciplinary action for students and employees, while all other individuals will be refused access to law school premises.

Pursuant to Texas’ Penal Code Sections 30.06 and 30.07, a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code, may not enter the law school with either a concealed handgun or an openly carried handgun. Signage is posted at various entrances to the law school that complies with the notice requirements of both Sections 30.06 and 30.07.

### **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 Resources

### *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 job searching. 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 students along the way, including:

- Career Development Programs and Panels
- Self-Assessments
- Individualized Career Counseling
- Resume and Cover Letter Review
- On-Campus Recruitment Opportunities
  - On-Campus Interviews (OCI)
  - Resume Collections
  - Recruiting Mini-Sessions
  - Government and Public Interest Table Talk
- Off-Campus Recruitment Opportunities and Job-Fairs
- Networking Events
- Mock Interview Programs
- Online Job Board (Symplicity)
- Intercollegiate Job Bank Reciprocity
- Career Advisor Directory (CAD)

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

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### **1L Career Services Restriction**

Because 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. To support this transition period, STCL Career Resource Center will not initiate career-related communications to first-year students before the first Monday in October (for the fall entering class), or the first Monday in February (for the spring entering class), whichever date is applicable.

#### **Student Professionalism and Recruitment Counseling**

As a pre-requisite to participation in any career recruitment event, whether sponsored and/or facilitated by STCL Houston, each student is expected to undergo recruitment counseling AND execute a "[Student Professionalism and Recruitment Counseling](#)" verification form. Failure to comply with any of the standards set forth in the "Student Professionalism and Recruitment Counseling" verification will result in forfeiture of Career Resource Center services as well as the ability to participate in any recruitment events.

The Student Professionalism Standards contained in the "Student Professionalism and Recruitment Counseling" verification form are separate and apart from the STCLH Student Handbook and do not alter or change any the of handbook's requirements.

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### **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 school 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. How-to guides for accessing email, connecting to the wireless network, downloading apps such as Office 365, Zoom, using the college's learning management system, D2L's Brightspace and student printing can be found on the Information Systems or Instructional Technology's department pages in Stanley.

STANLEY and email access will continue for one year following a student who has graduated or has withdrawn and plans to return. Students who withdraw with no intent to return, transfer, or are dismissed will have STANLEY and email access immediately turned off.

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### ***Copy Center Binding***

The STCL Houston Copy Center is offering document binding to all students. Binding for students will be from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm Monday – Friday on the 8th floor in office 838T. Each student will be limited to 8 free binds with a blue or red cover page with or without print per semester.

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### ***Financial Aid***

In accordance with the law school's mission statement, Student Services ensures that all students receive the maximum financial aid for which they are eligible, including federal, state, and institutional aid and make the application process as seamless as possible and to eliminate any unnecessary barriers.

Student Services also strives to deliver financial aid in a 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.

Student Services is in Suite 267. Additional financial aid information may be found at [stcl.edu/financialaid](http://stcl.edu/financialaid).

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### ***Law Library***

The Fred Parks Law Library offers students access to more than 100 law-related databases; a comprehensive range of government documents; legal research guides; study aids; and special collections, including rare books, manuscripts, and archives, as well as research instruction and assistance. The Law Library observes extended service hours during final exam periods and abbreviated service hours between semesters and during holidays. Except during the winter break, the Law Library is accessible when the building is open. For more information about Law Library services, study room reservations, and hours of operation, visit the [The Fred Parks Law Library](#) page.

#### **Library Food, Drink, and Tobacco Policy**

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

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## Lockers

### Assigned Lockers

A limited quantity of lockers is available on a first-come, first-served basis for enrolled students through your STANLEY 2.0 portal. You must read and accept the Terms of Agreement.

The locker agreement can be found via:

- Self-Service Quick Links
- Locker Agreement

Locker requests may be submitted at any time throughout the year. However, we recommend newly admitted students explore the campus during orientation before selecting a locker location. Once a locker is chosen, switching to a different locker may be difficult because of the limited availability of lockers.

If you no longer need your locker, please email [studentengagement@stcl.edu](mailto:studentengagement@stcl.edu) to let us know. We will unassign it and make it available for another student.

We recommend the [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 the Office of Student Engagement at [studentengagement@stcl.edu](mailto:studentengagement@stcl.edu).

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## Mailboxes

There are no student mailboxes. Students are not permitted to use the college address for personal mail.

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## Parking

Students must [provide vehicle information](#) via Stanley [self-service](#) each semester of enrollment to gain access to student parking lots. The College owns two parking lots exclusively for student parking. One lot is located at the southwest corner of San Jacinto and Bell Streets, with the entrance on San Jacinto. This parking lot is identified as the San Jacinto Lot. The second lot is located at the southeast corner of San Jacinto and Bell Streets, with the entrance on Bell. This parking lot is identified as the Bell Street Lot.

You must use your current South Texas College of Law Houston student ID card to gain access to these lots; however, access will not be activated until you have completed and submitted the Student Vehicle Information Form (“Form”). The Form is available on Stanley and must be submitted electronically. Once submitted, the form will be processed within 2 business days. To check and see if you have access to the parking lot, please stop by the security desk and have them test your ID card. This Form must be completed and submitted each semester. All information on this Form will be kept confidential and used strictly by the Security Department for purposes of ensuring compliance with the provisions stated below:

- All vehicles to include, motorcycles (“Vehicles”); are required to be properly registered with the law school.
- If you need to temporarily drive a rental or other vehicle that is not registered, please contact the security desk at 713-646-1743 prior to parking.
- Vehicles must be parked in a designated numbered parking space and within the lines of that space.
- Motorcycles are only allowed to park in spaces 69, 70, 71, and 72 in the San Jacinto Lot.
- Cars and trucks are not allowed to park in the motorcycle spaces.
- Motorcycles are not allowed to park in car and truck spaces.

Vehicles must be removed from the student parking lots by 12:30 a.m. daily, no overnight parking is permitted. Vehicle access into the student parking lots will not be permitted between midnight and 06:00 a.m.

Any violations of this policy will result in one warning. On the second violation, your access to the student parking lots will be suspended for the remainder of the semester the second violation occurs, plus another full semester. Please be aware that it is a violation of College Policy to share your ID card with others and/or use your card to allow access into the parking lots to others. Doing so can result in the permanent suspension of all parking privileges. The College assumes no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss incurred as a result of parking on any of the lots.

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### ***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.

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### ***Student Engagement Office***

The Office of Student Engagement is a resource for students interested in joining one of the law school's more than 40 student organizations, co-curricular organizations, publications, and law fraternities. For more information visit the [Office of Student Engagement](#) page.

#### **Virtual Participation Online for Part-Time Students**

Part-time students who wish to virtually attend a live event should contact the Director of Student Engagement, Kirk Guillory, at [studentengagement@stcl.edu](mailto:studentengagement@stcl.edu), who will assist in making the audio and video arrangements and provide you with a zoom link if possible. Note: Student engagement will ordinarily need at least 48 hours in advance of an event to allow for audio and video streaming, and this option is only available to part-time students.

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### ***Student Services***

Student Services is responsible for:

- Providing financial aid counseling related to loans and scholarships and academic counseling related to class scheduling, attendance, exams, grading, etc.
- Enforcing South Texas College of Law Houston academic and financial aid policies
- Facilitating disbursements, loan adjustments, registration, final examinations, and graduation
- Maintaining academic records for current and past students
- Maintaining student contact information
- Providing information to the Veterans Administration for Veteran's Benefits recipients and to the Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVIS) for international students with an F1 visa status; and
- Certifying students for Texas and out-of-state bar examinations.

Student Services provides the following upon request:

- [Degree verifications](#)
- [Enrollment verifications](#) (select “Letter of Standing”, then “Verification of enrollment...”)
- [Letters of standing](#)
  - **General Letter of Standing:** Request this letter if you or a 3<sup>rd</sup> party requires an official document confirming your current academic standing.
  - **Transfer Letter of Standing:** Request this letter if you plan on transferring to another ABA-approved law school. Must pay \$35 per letter, per school. Payments must be received before requests can be processed.
    - **Note:** Students who have been dismissed do not have to pay the \$35 fee. In this case, please notify [studentservices@stcl.edu](mailto:studentservices@stcl.edu) and [accountingservices@stcl.edu](mailto:accountingservices@stcl.edu) upon submission of your request.
  - **Transient Letter of Standing:**
    - *Visiting another law school:* Request this letter if you plan on visiting and receiving credit from another ABA Approved law school. Please refer to our [Visiting Other ABA-Approved Law School policy](#) to ensure that you meet the requirements.
    - *Non Co-Sponsored Study Abroad:* Request this letter if you plan on participating in and receiving credit for a study abroad program hosted by another non co-sponsored ABA-Approved law school. Please refer to our [Visiting Other ABA-Approved Law School policy](#) to ensure that you meet the requirements.
  - **Verification of Enrollment:** This is official document verifies your current enrollment information such as registered hours for the current term, registered hours for previous terms, and your anticipated graduation date.
    - **Note:** Enrollments verifications for future terms may only be released after the first week of classes has passed. <https://etcentral.stcl.edu/>
- Transcripts:
  - Official transcripts can be ordered (with applicable attachments) online through the National Student Clearinghouse at the [Transcript Ordering Center](#) for \$3.90 per transcript. Turn-around time is 15 minutes to 24 hours.
  - Unofficial transcripts can be printed from [student self-service in STANLEY](#).

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### **Student Support**

The Office of Student Support is committed to supporting students in reaching their fullest academic potential with a strong and sincere interest in their overall well-being.

The Office of Student Support:

- Offers student counseling services related to personal and professional concerns affecting academic progress, including mental, emotional, and physical health concerns
- Committed to providing reasonable accommodations to our students with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Consistently strive to develop student wellness programming that foster the development of healthy habits and lay the groundwork for students to lead a balanced and healthy lifestyle
- Provides referrals to external professional assistance and wellness programs, when applicable.

Students seeking more information may make an appointment by contacting the [Office of Student Support](#).

## Free Speech Policy

Effective legal education and the development of the law require the free, robust, and uninhibited sharing of ideas reflecting a wide range of viewpoints. Becoming an effective advocate or counselor requires learning how to conduct candid and civil discourse in respectful disagreement with others while advancing reasoned and evidence-based arguments. Concerns about civility and mutual respect, however, do not justify barring discussion of ideas because they are controversial or even offensive or disagreeable to some.

I. South Texas College of Law Houston (STCLH) adheres to a written policy that protects academic freedom as declared by the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, as interpreted by the 1970 comments, and as addressed in the AAUP's 2014 report on Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications. This policy shall:

- A. Apply to all full and part-time faculty, as well as to all others teaching in law school courses;
- B. Apply to conducting research; writing and publishing scholarship; engaging in law school governance; participating in public service activities; making public statements, including at conferences and on social media; curating library collections and providing information services; and exercising teaching responsibilities, including those related to client representation in clinical programs; and
- C. Afford due process, such as notice, hearing, and appeal rights, to assess any claim of a violation of the academic freedom policies.

II. STCLH adheres to a written policy that encourages and supports the free expression of ideas. This policy shall:

- A. Protect the rights of faculty, students, staff, and the speakers they are authorized to invite, to communicate and receive ideas that may be controversial or unpopular, including through robust debate, demonstrations, or protests; and Page 2 of 3
- B. Proscribe disruptive conduct, which includes:
  - 1. preventing or substantially interfering with the carrying out of law school functions or approved activities, such as classes, meetings, library services, interviews, ceremonies, and public events; or
  - 2. preventing or substantially interfering with the ability of speakers to deliver their presentation as and in the manner, they intended, consistent with this policy.
- C. This written policy does not provide a private cause of action and does not create any legally enforceable rights.

III. STCLH adheres to the following procedure regarding disruptive conduct.

- A. Level 1: When the Dean or any Associate Dean receives credible notice of possible or ongoing disruptive conduct at a law school function or approved activity, the Dean of Students will serve as the designated official (DO). If the Dean of Students cannot serve as DO, the Dean or the Dean's designee shall promptly appoint another Associate Dean as DO, or if no Associate Dean can serve, a faculty member.
- B. Level 2: The DO shall, time permitting, email the student body with a copy of this policy, and highlight the consequences for violating this policy, including removal from the law school function or approved activity. The DO shall also consult and coordinate a plan with STCLH Security.
- C. Level 3: The DO and STCLH Security shall attend the law school function or approved activity where there is possible or ongoing disruptive conduct. The DO shall issue an oral warning that those engaged in disruptive conduct will be removed from the law school function or approved activity. If, due to exigent circumstances, or for some other reason, there is not a DO at the meeting, the Level 3 and 4

procedures shall be implemented by a faculty advisor for a student organization, or if more than one faculty advisor is present or none are present, by the ranking faculty member present.

D. Level 4: If disruptive conduct continues after an oral warning, the DO shall instruct STCLH security to promptly take all reasonable steps to remove from the law school function or approved activity any person who engages in disruptive conduct. STCLH security shall then take such steps in accordance with its own policies and procedures.

E. Level 5: Removal from the law school function or approved activity is separate from any potential discipline that may be issued pursuant to STCLH disciplinary policies.

IV. Consistent with this Standard, STCLH may:

A. Reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression without regard to the viewpoint or content of the speech.

B. Enforce the requirements imposed by the Student, Staff, and Faculty Handbooks and similar procedures.

C. Restrict expression that:

1. violates the law, regulation, ordinance, or similar;
2. defames a specific individual or identifiable group; Page 3 of 3
3. constitutes a true threat;
4. constitutes discrimination or harassment as defined by law school policies and procedures;
5. or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests.