



Sam Houston State University

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Sumanth Yenduri, PhD

Office of the Provost

Dear colleagues,

As we conclude the academic year, I want to thank you for a successful semester. It has been busy across the division, and as a result, I have a lot of updates to share. This update spans topics ranging from enrollment initiatives to leadership searches. I encourage you to take a few moments to review this message.

2026 Distinguished Professors

Congratulations to our three new Distinguished Professors: Dr. Madhusudan Choudhary, Department of Biological Sciences; Dr. Craig Henderson, Department of Psychology and Philosophy; and Dr. Hiranya Nath, Department of Economics and International Business. They will be formally recognized at the Academic Awards Dinner in the fall.

Research & External Funding Update

The year-to-date (September-March) external funding submissions and awards for fiscal year 2025-2026 are:

- 132 Proposals submitted for \$77,981,256
- 51 Proposals awarded for \$18,447,309

In addition, the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (ORSP) is launching four [research clusters](#):

- [Biomedical Sciences and Health](#)
- [Education and Training](#)
- [Forensic Sciences](#)
- [Security, Resilience, and Defense](#)

These areas reflect where faculty expertise, research infrastructure, and active projects are already making an impact, while also offering strong opportunities for future growth aligned with federal funding priorities.

[Complete Research Cluster Interest Form](#)

Each cluster will have a 3-hour research retreat in May to welcome new members and begin collaborations. [Register by April 24](#) to attend one of the retreats. For more information, [contact ORSP](#).

Leadership Search Updates

Thank you to all of you who are serving on search advisory committees or have participated in the ongoing search processes.

Dean, College of Education

Dr. Abbie Strunc will serve as interim dean of the College of Education, effective May 11.

I am grateful to Dr. Stacey Edmonson for her dedicated leadership and countless contributions to the College of Education during her time at SHSU and wish her continued success as she transitions to vice chancellor in the Texas A&M University System.

Dean, The Graduate & Professional School

On-campus interviews for the new dean of The Graduate & Professional School concluded Tuesday, April 21.

Vice President for Research & Sponsored Programs, Office of Research & Sponsored Programs

The search committee is reviewing applications until April 23.

Associate Vice President and Chief Online Education Officer, SHSU Online

The search committee will begin reviewing applications on May 8.

Enrollment Initiatives

As we work collaboratively across the university to increase student enrollment, I wanted to provide insights into current enrollment efforts.

Enrollment Management

Enrollment Management (EM) in the Division of Strategic Enrollment & Innovation (SEI) shared [a report](#) that provides context and depth regarding strategies to recruit and yield students for fall 2026 and lays the groundwork for future enrollment cycles. [The document](#) includes collaboration with the

colleges, systems, academic programs, and marketing departments to yield effective campaigns and direct follow up to nurture relationships.

Online Student Enrollment

In collaboration with the colleges, SEI, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), The Graduate & Professional School (GPS), the SAM Center, and marketing vendors, SHSU Online efforts include institution-level and program-level digital campaigns and follow-up through email, text, phone, and virtual engagement. The efforts focus on adult, working, transfer, and post-baccalaureate students.

- Online student inquiries have increased more than 70% year over year (January-March), indicating strong interest.
- More than 2,332 students have enrolled 100% online in target programs, we're at 32% of the fall 2026 goal.
- Online enrollment is currently pacing more than 28% ahead in comparison to last year at this time. We anticipate enrollment will stabilize as we get closer to the start of the fall semester.
- Online semester credit hours are pacing similarly at 19% compared to this time last year.

Graduate Student Enrollment

The GPS recently launched an auto-admit campaign to qualifying graduating SHSU seniors. This campaign includes several programs across six colleges. To date, 57 students have indicated interest in starting graduate school in the summer or fall, and another 31 students have requested more information.

Graduate enrollment is on track for summer and fall. The graduate marketing campaign is effective in bringing potential students to the applicant pool, and outside vendor Education Connex in conjunction with the new recruiter in GPS, are nurturing applicants through the process. Because of this, the conversion of accepted to enrolled students is going well.

International Student Enrollment

International student admissions are up from 62 students at this time last year to 102 for fall 2026. In addition, the Global Engagement Center (GEC), in collaboration with EM, is in the process of signing international agents to recruit international students. The GEC is also streamlining operations to enhance its service to international students. These changes will have a positive impact on international student enrollment and retention and will help to mitigate the effect of recent increased restrictions on student visas.

Polytechnic College Student Enrollment

The Polytechnic College (SamPoly) first cohort is expected to graduate this semester. Of the three existing programs, Paralegal Studies continues to show strong enrollment trends. Student demand in SamPoly programs continues to grow, with 454 Requests for Information (RFIs) received since

June 2025 and 164 applications submitted. Ongoing collaboration with IMC and external partners has improved lead quality and conversion, with continued focus on data-informed recruitment strategies.

New programs in Real Estate, HVAC, and Health Information Technology are scheduled to launch in fall 2026. Additional potential programs under evaluation include aviation, advanced manufacturing (mechatronics), and medical imaging.

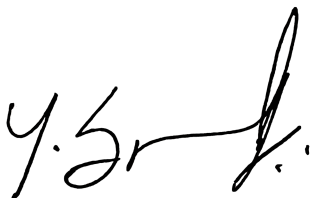
Dual Credit Student Enrollment

SHSU has an active agreement for dual credit with Huntsville ISD. In addition, we have pending agreements with six local ISDs to offer dual credit courses that we hope will be finalized for fall 2026. Included in this expansion, SamPoly will begin offering dual credit coursework with a fall 2026 pilot with Dickinson ISD and a broader dual credit rollout in fall 2027.

I am grateful for your efforts this year and look forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

Sumanth Yenduri, PhD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Yenduri', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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

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