

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Sam Houston State University

AND

Odessa College

Sam Houston State University (SHSU), an agency and institution of higher education authorized under the laws of the State of Texas and member institution of the Texas State University System and Odessa College (OC) are linked by common academic interests and seek to develop collaborations and exchanges in fields of shared interest and expertise. The activities undertaken pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are based on a spirit of cooperation and reciprocity that is intended to be of mutual benefit to both parties.

This MOU formally recognizes that SHSU and OC are actively committed to enhancing the educational experiences and services for students attending both schools.

I. PURPOSE

- A. This MOU serves as a written understanding of agreed upon principles between SHSU and OC concerning a set of general objectives, including but not limited to:
 - a. Transfer of credit, including reverse transfer;
 - b. Program-to-Program Transfer Maps;
 - c. Exchange of Data;
 - d. Marketing and Recruitment; and
 - e. Parameters of Collaboration.

II. TRANSFER OF CREDIT

A. Criteria for Lower-Division Course Credit

Lower-Division (Baccalaureate/Associate Degree) Courses offered in the first 2 years of college study are generally those which:

- a. Are identified by a majority of public 4-year undergraduate

institutions in the state as courses intended to comprise the first two years of collegiate study.

- b. Stress development of disciplinary knowledge and skill at an introductory level.
- c. Include basic principles and verbal, mathematical, and scientific concepts associated with an academic discipline.

B. Criteria for Upper-Division Course Credit

Upper-Division (Baccalaureate) Courses offered only in the third or fourth years of a baccalaureate program are those which:

- a. Are identified by a majority of public 4-year undergraduate institutions in the state as courses intended to comprise the third and fourth years of post-secondary study.
- b. Involve theoretical or analytical specialization beyond the introductory level.
- c. Require knowledge and skills provided by previous courses for successful performance by students.

C. Free Transferability

Lower-division courses included in the *Academic Course Guide Manual* (www.highered.texas.gov) and specified in the definition of “Lower-Division Course Credit” shall be freely transferable to and accepted as comparable degree credit by any Texas public institution of higher education where the equivalent course is available for fulfilling baccalaureate degree requirements. It is understood that each Texas institution of higher education may have limitations that invalidate courses after a specific length of time.

For Texas community colleges, these freely transferable courses are identified in the latest revised edition of Coordinating Board publication *Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual*, (www.highered.texas.gov) (revised 2021).

Specifically excluded are courses designated as vocational, English as a Second Language, ESL/ESOL, technical, developmental or remedial, and courses listed as “basic skills.”

For senior four-year institutions, lower-division courses that have the same course

content and CIP codes as approved by the Coordinating Board shall bear equivalent credit. Specifically excluded are courses designated as ESL/ESOL, technical and developmental/remedial courses.

Within the spirit of the law it is realized that differences in interpretation of “same course content” may generate disputes.

- D. **WECM Courses** are designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as workforce education (technical) courses offered for credit and CEUs (Continuing Education Units). While these courses are designed to transfer among state community colleges, they are not designed to automatically transfer to public four-year colleges and universities. SHSU offers Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) programs where 36 hours of technical workforce education (technical) courses will transfer in-block. Students must have earned an Associate of Applied Sciences [AAS] or an Associates of Occupational Studies [AOS], or an Associates of Applied Business [AAB], or an Associates of Specialized Technology [AST] degree, and the specialty title of the AAS, AOS, AAB or AST degree must be posted to the transcript for approval for entry into the BAAS program. Students must be advised by the BAAS program coordinator to have transcripts reviewed and a declaration of major/minor submitted before full acceptance into the BAAS program is finalized.

E. **Field of Study Curriculum/ Texas Direct Associates Degree**

The Field of Study Curriculum is a set of courses that generally apply toward the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific academic area at a general academic teaching institution. In accordance to Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter B, §§ 4.39, alignment to the Texas Direct Associates Degree programs will apply toward requirements for a baccalaureate degree in specific academic area.

F. **Core Curriculum – (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)**

The curriculum in liberal arts, humanities, sciences, and political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an academic undergraduate degree. (*The Texas Core Curriculum (TCC) is established in the Texas Education Code,*

Chapter 61, Subchapter S. Coordinating Board rules regarding TCC are in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter B.)

G. Reverse Transfer

Reverse transfer allows students to transfer course work from SHSU back to OC in order to complete requirements for the associate degree. This program is specifically designed to allow students to receive the advantages pursuant to completion of the associate degree when they leave OC prior to degree completion. Within two weeks after the beginning of each semester (fall, summer, and spring), SHSU will have available, *at OC's request*, a reverse transfer file showing transfer students' completed hours that may qualify them for the awarding of an associate degree at OC. SHSU will facilitate the reverse transfer process through the National Student Clearinghouse.

III. PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM TRANSFER

- A. Associate Degree to Baccalaureate Degree: SHSU and OC will collaborate with academic leadership at both institutions to identify associate degree programs that will feed into a baccalaureate degree at Sam Houston State University.
(Commonly referred to as a 2+2 program)
- B. Honors College: SHSU and OC will create a seamless transition process for qualified students wishing to join SHSU's Elliott T. Bowers Honors College. Admission to the Honors College requires a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or better on all college work; applicants who do not meet this GPA may apply for a holistic review. Students transferring from OC's Honors Program may transfer up to 12 semester hours of honors credit (with a grade of "B" or better) that will count toward the 24 hours of coursework required for Honors College recognition at SHSU. The Honors College will also assess, on an individual basis, other academic achievements, such as research presentations, internships, or study-abroad experiences, for potential honors credit. Exceptional transfer honors students will be eligible for one-time honors transfer scholarships worth up to \$3,000.

IV. EXCHANGE OF DATA

SHSU and OC will develop data exchange processes to ensure an effective transfer process and student success. Within the guidelines and regulations of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), OC will provide SHSU with the following data elements at the start of each term unless otherwise specified:

- A. Directory information and limited directory information, as designated by OC, for students who have expressed an interest in transferring to SHSU;
- B. Major area of interest for students who have expressed an interest in transferring to SHSU; and
- C. Other student information within legal guidelines necessary for the Parties to make students aware of scholarship, financial aid, and the potential to satisfy degree requirements by transferring coursework between both Parties.
- D. Transcripts of students who have applied to SHSU shall be provided **monthly** by OC at the request of SHSU through secure transmission via a shared SFTP site;
- E. Prospective student lists for marketing and recruitment.

SHSU will provide OC transfer student enrollment, success, and completion statistics.

The Parties intend that data transferred from OC to SHSU is and remains the sole and exclusive property of OC. Further, the Parties shall maintain data sharing practices and storage consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as OC's and SHSU's policies and procedures for managing student records and other confidential information.

V. **MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT**

SHSU and OC will collaboratively develop a strategic, joint- branded marketing and recruitment campaign designed to expose OC prospects and students to the opportunities and requirements of transfer to SHSU. The institutions will identify select degree programs for which specific marketing and recruitment materials will be developed and distributed (refer to addendum for list). Materials can include but are not limited to:

- A. Transfer degree maps
- B. SHSU Representation at transfer fairs/events
- C. Targeted email campaigns

VI. PARTNERSHIP PARAMETERS

- A. OC and SHSU will exchange information within legal guidelines with the goal of making students aware of scholarship, financial aid, and the potential to satisfy degree requirements by transferring course work between both institutions.
- B. SHSU will recognize, for transfer credit within legal and accreditation limitations, course work submitted from OC resulting from transfer credit, dual/concurrent enrollment, advanced placement, CLEP, or other recognized means by which credit is awarded by examination (as appropriate and subject to OC policies).
- C. OC and SHSU will strive to make financial aid transfer between the respective institutions as convenient as possible for the student.
- D. OC will be responsible for assuring students comply with state-mandated higher education admission requirements, such as the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). It should be noted that students seeking certification in a teaching field are generally subject to more stringent requirements than students in the general population.
- E. Separate academic records for students will be maintained at each institution. Periodic exchange of information, advantageous to students, OC, or SHSU, is anticipated.
- F. The parties will collaborate to share information concerning the benefit of reverse transfer of credit for eligible transfer students.
- G. The parties shall only share or exchange student educational records under this MOU in a manner compliant with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- H. The parties acknowledge that as an agency of the State of Texas, SHSU must strictly adhere to all statutes, court decisions and opinions of the Texas Attorney General with respect to disclosure of public information under the Texas Public

Information Act, Chapter 552, Texas Government Code. OC is required to make any information created or exchanged pursuant to this MOU, that is not otherwise excepted from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, available in a format that is accessible by the public at no additional charge to the state. The following format(s) shall be deemed to be in compliance with this provision: electronic files in Word, PDF, or similar generally accessible format

VII. TERM

Termination and renewal of this memorandum of understanding:

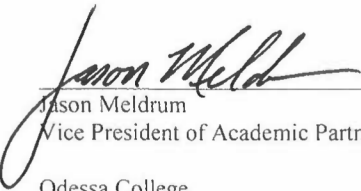
- A. This arrangement is expected to commence with the start of the Fall 2025 for a period of **5** years. It will terminate with the start of the **Fall 2030** unless it is renewed.
- B. Prior to any termination, the MOU may be renewed with the consent of both parties for a period not to exceed five (5) years.
- C. The MOU may be terminated by either institution by submitting written notice of the intent to terminate. The termination notice must be submitted 30 days before the term when the termination is to become effective.
- D. In the event this MOU is terminated, both parties will make every effort to protect individual students who are already part of the program.

VIII: SIGNATURES

- A. Notwithstanding any provision of this MOU, nothing herein shall be construed as a waiver by the parties of their constitutional or common law rights, privileges, immunities, or defenses. To the extent any term of this paragraph conflicts with any other provision in this MOU, the terms of this paragraph shall control.
- B. This MOU shall enter into force on the date of full and final execution by qualified representatives of both institutions.
- C. Notices. All notices and official correspondence required or necessitated by this MOU shall be provided by mail or email at the following addresses:

Odessa College	Sam Houston State University
Jason Meldrum Vice President Academic Partnerships ADMIN 213 A 201 W. University, Odessa, TX 79764 jmeldrum@odessa.edu 432-335-6493	Edgard Sanchez Director Transfer Partnerships & Early College Credit Office of the Provost Bobby K. Marks Administration Building, Suite 302 1806 Ave J, Huntsville, TX 77340 esanchez@shsu.edu (936) 294-1103

This framework of cooperation between Sam Houston State University and Odessa College is agreed to as of the date last written below:


Jason Meldrum
Vice President of Academic Partnerships
Odessa College

Date 11/19/25

 3/27/26
Sumanth Yenduri (Mar 27, 2026 16:16:47 CDT) Date
Sumanth Yenduri, Ph.D.
Provost & Sr. Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Sam Houston State University
