

***UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON – DOWNTOWN***  
***HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY***

*Prepared by the UHD Provost's Office*

*August 2005*

*The University of Houston-Downtown reserves the right to change or amend any of the policies and other material contained in this handbook at any time.*

# HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i> .....	7
<b>SECTION I. UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1.1 History.....	8
1.2 University Mission Statement.....	9
1.3 Accreditation.....	10
1.4 UH System Administration.....	10
1.5 Governing Board.....	10
1.6 State Oversight.....	11
<b>SECTION II. UH DOWNTOWN’S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE</b> .....	<b>12</b>
2.1 Overview.....	12
2.2 President’s Office.....	12
2.2.1 Office of University Advancement.....	13
2.3 Division of Academic Affairs.....	13
College Structure .....	13
2.3.1 College of Business.....	14
Management, Marketing and Business Administration (MMBA) ...	14
Finance, Accounting and Computer Information Systems (FACIS)...	15
2.3.2 College of Humanities and Social Sciences .....	15
Arts and Humanities.....	15
Social Sciences .....	16
English.....	16
2.3.3 College of Public Service .....	16
Criminal Justice.....	16
Urban Education.....	17
2.3.4 College of Sciences and Technology .....	17
Computer and Mathematical Sciences .....	17
Engineering Technology .....	17
Natural Sciences .....	18
2.3.5 University College.....	18
Academic Advising Center .....	18
The Learners Community.....	18
Community Outreach Programs.....	18
Disabled Student Services .....	19
Articulation Services .....	19
Other Components of Academic Affairs.....	19
2.3.6 W. I. Dykes Library.....	19
2.3.7 Office of Distance Education .....	19
2.3.8 Office of International Education.....	20
2.3.9 Institutional Research and Planning .....	20
2.3.10 Continuing Education.....	20
Applied Business and Technology Center .....	21

	English Language Institute .....	21
	2.3.11 Community Relations and Conference Services .....	21
2.4	Division of Administration and Finance.....	21
	Administrative Services .....	22
	2.4.1 Budget and Planning .....	22
	2.4.2 Purchasing .....	22
	2.4.3 Contract Administration .....	22
	Bookstore.....	22
	Food Services .....	23
	2.4.4 Business Affairs .....	23
	Accounts Payable .....	23
	Travel Office .....	23
	Student Accounting .....	23
	Cashier’s Office.....	23
	Property Management .....	23
	Grant Accounting .....	24
	2.4.5 Facilities Management .....	24
	Mail and Inter-Campus Courier Services .....	24
	Receiving Office.....	24
	2.4.6 Information Technology.....	24
	Information Technology Management and Administration .....	24
	Administrative Applications.....	25
	Computing, Telecommunications, and Video Network Infrastructure Services.....	25
	Technical Services.....	25
	Technology Teaching and Learning Center .....	25
	Instructional Technology.....	25
	Multimedia ITV Services .....	25
	User Support Services .....	26
	Academic Computing Lab.....	26
	2.4.7 Police .....	26
	Parking Regulations and Permits .....	26
	Lost and Found.....	26
	2.4.8 Sponsored Research .....	26
2.5	Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management .....	27
	Enrollment Management .....	27
	2.5.1 Admissions .....	27
	2.5.2 Registrar .....	27
	2.5.3 Scholarships and Financial Aid.....	27
	2.5.4 Transfer Center.....	27
	Student Services .....	28
	2.5.5 Counseling, Career and Student Health Services.....	29
	Counseling Center .....	28
	Career Services.....	28

Student Health Services.....	28
Student Assistance Program.....	29
2.5.6 Sports and Fitness.....	29
2.5.7 Student Activities and Events.....	29
Posting of Notices .....	29
2.6 Division of Employment Services and Operations.....	29
2.6.1 Affirmative Action Compliance.....	30
2.6.2 Benefits.....	30
2.6.3 Compensation and Compliance Reporting.....	30
2.6.4 Employment .....	30
2.6.5 Payroll .....	31
2.6.6 Peoplesoft .....	31
2.6.7 Records.....	31
2.6.8 Retirement Counseling.....	31
2.6.9 Mental Health Services .....	31
SECTION III. FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY .....	32
3.1 University Commitment.....	32
3.2 Awareness of Basic University Policies and Procedures .....	32
3.3 Shared Governance.....	32
3.4 Committee Assignments.....	33
3.5 Teaching Responsibilities.....	33
3.6 Meeting Classes.....	33
3.7 Ordering Textbooks.....	33
3.8 Final Examination Policy .....	34
3.9 Reading Days .....	34
3.10 Assigning Grades .....	34
3.11 Reporting Grades .....	34
3.12 Retention of Examinations and Other Graded Material .....	34
3.13 Faculty Compliance with Federal Privacy Laws .....	35
3.14 Course Assignments.....	35
3.15 Classroom Changes.....	35
3.16 Classroom Management.....	35
3.17 Course Evaluations .....	36
3.18 Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.....	36
3.19 Academic Honesty Code.....	36
3.20 Office Hours.....	36
3.21 Syllabi.....	36
3.21.1 Course Identification Information .....	37
3.21.2 Instructor Contact Information .....	37
3.21.3 Basic Content and Evaluation Criteria .....	37
3.21.4 Course Outline and Tentative Schedule .....	37
3.21.5 General University Policies and Procedures .....	37
3.21.6 Class Policies.....	37

3.22	Class Records.....	37
3.23	Class Rosters .....	37
3.24	Academic Responsibility .....	38
3.25	Professional Development .....	38
3.26	Documentation of Professional Accomplishments.....	38
3.27	Service Responsibilities.....	38
3.28	Responsibility to Colleagues.....	38
3.29	Professional Ethics.....	39
3.29.1	American Association of University Professors Statement on Professional Ethics of 1987 .....	39
3.30	Commencement Exercises .....	40
3.31	Contract Dates .....	40
3.32	Maintaining a Correct Mailing Address .....	40
3.33	Notice of Intention to Resign.....	40
3.34	Use of Equipment and Facilities.....	40
3.35	Commitments on Behalf of the University .....	41
3.36	Official Representation.....	41
3.37	Consulting and Outside Employment .....	41
3.38	Student Absences on Religious Holy Days .....	41
3.39	Use of Technology .....	41
 SECTION IV. GUIDE TO UNIVERSITY POLICIES .....		42
4.1	Policy Overview.....	42
4.2	Academic Policies.....	42
PS 03.A.01	Honorary Degrees .....	42
PS 03.A.02	Placement and Course Sequencing .....	43
PS 03.A.03	Auditing Courses.....	43
PS 03.A.04	Grading System.....	43
PS 03.A.05	Dean’s List .....	43
PS 03.A.06	Graduation and Commencement.....	43
PS 03.A.07	Academic Probation and Suspension.....	43
PS 03.A.08	Academic Amnesty .....	43
PS 03.A.09	Subsequent Enrollment .....	43
PS 03.A.10	Acceptance of Transfer Credit .....	43
PS 03.A.11	Credit by Examination .....	43
PS 03.A.12	Annual Review and Update of Course Inventory .....	43
PS 03.A.13	Approval Procedure for New Degree Programs .....	43
PS 03.A.14	Procedure for Approval of New Courses.....	43
PS 03.A.15	Procedure for Approval of Alteration to Courses .....	44
PS 03.A.16	UHD Library Circulation Policy.....	44
PS 03.A.17	Directed Studies Policy .....	44
PS 03.A.18	Library Interlibrary Loan Policy .....	44
PS 03.A.19	Academic Honesty Policy .....	44
PS 03.A.20	Approval Procedure for Non-Substantive Degree Program ..	44
PS 03.A.21	Field Experience .....	44
PS 03.A.22	Access to Student Academic Records/Information .....	44

	PS 03.A.23 Protection of Human Subjects.....	44
	PS 03.A.24 Admission of Students .....	44
	PS 03.A.25 Academic Freedom .....	44
	PS 03.A.26 Student Course Evaluations .....	44
	PS 03.A.27 Approval Process for Degree Minors.....	44
	PS 03.A.28 Satisfactory Progress for Students Enrolled in Developmental Courses .....	44
	PS 03.A.29 Course Syllabi .....	45
	PS 03.A.30 Shortened Format Courses .....	45
4.3	Faculty Affairs Policies.....	45
	PS 10.A.01 Rank and Tenure System .....	45
	PS 10.A.02 Faculty Grievance Procedures .....	45
	PS 10.A.03 Academic Appointments.....	45
	PS 10.A.04 Faculty Teaching Workload.....	45
	PS 10.A.05 Faculty Performance Evaluations .....	45
	PS 10.A.06 Faculty Dismissal Policy and Procedures .....	45
	PS 10.A.07 Faculty Non-Reappointment .....	46
	PS 10.A.08 University Funded Faculty Development Leaves .....	46
	PS 10.A.09 Faculty Salary Adjustments .....	46
	PS 10.A.10 Granting Emeritus Status to Faculty/Benefits of Emeritus Status .....	46
	PS 10.A.11 Annual Evaluation of Department Chairmen.....	46
	PS 10.A.12 Annual Evaluation of Academic Deans .....	46
	PS 10.A.13 Faculty Employment Policies .....	46
	PS 10.A.14 Faculty Leaves Not Funded by the University.....	46
	PS 10.A.15 Adjunct Lecturers.....	46
	PS 10.A.16 Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty .....	47
	PS 10.A.17 Appointment of Department Chairs .....	47
4.4	Other University Policies.....	48
4.5	Required Approval/Disclosure Forms .....	48
	4.5.1 Consulting and Outside Employment.....	48
	4.5.2 Dual Employment Inside the UH System .....	49
	4.5.3 Approval/Notification Procedures for Overnight Faculty-Led Student Travel in the U.S.....	49
	4.5.4 Approval/Notification Procedures for Study Abroad Programs .....	49
	4.5.5 Application for Vacation, Sick Leave and Emergency Leave .....	50
	4.5.6 Independent Study .....	50
	4.5.7 Academic Honesty Report.....	50
	<b>SECTION V. GUIDE TO EMPLOYEE BENEFITS .....</b>	<b>51</b>
	5.1 Overview.....	51
	5.2 Eligibility .....	51
	5.3 Insurance Programs.....	51
	5.4 TexFlex Reimbursement Account .....	52
	5.5 Retirement Programs .....	53

## *Preface*

*The University of Houston-Downtown Handbook for Faculty* is designed to provide faculty members the basic information they need to know about the University. The handbook is organized into four major sections. The first provides a general overview of the history of the University and its mission. The second section describes its administrative structure and the services that various offices provide. The third section discusses faculty responsibility and the role of the faculty in university governance. The fourth section provides a summary of those policies in the University policy manual, the Board of Regent's Policies and System Administrative Memoranda that are of special relevance to faculty members. The final section outlines the benefits that the University provides its employees.

More detailed information on many of the topics covered in this handbook can be found elsewhere on the UHD web site. The most important of this information is linked directly to the handbook. The policy summaries in Section Four, for example, all have links to the full text of the policy as it appears in the [UHD Policy Manual](#), the Board of Regent's Policies and System Administrative Memoranda. This handbook is not intended to tell you everything you need to know about the University, but should provide you with enough direction about where to go for answers to most of your questions.

There are several other basic information sources all UH-Downtown faculty members should be familiar with in addition to the *Handbook for Faculty* and *The UHD Policy Manual*. One such information source is the *UH-Downtown University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog*. In addition to being available in hard copy, the catalog can be accessed online through the [Faculty e-Services Web Page](#).

The [Faculty e-Services Page](#) contains links to a number of valuable resources including academic calendars, class schedules, exam schedules, class rosters, and required forms and policies as well as to the UHD Library. This page also will provide web access to your university email account.

The [UH-Downtown Faculty and Staff web site](#) is another useful resource. Like faculty e-services, this site is also linked to directly from the University's main [web page](#). Designed as a "one-stop entry point for university information," the site contains links to the [current rosters of University committees](#), the [UHD Logos and the Graphic Standards Manual](#), [the Administrative Reference Manual](#), [Room Reservations and Facility Use Forms and Guidelines](#), and other important university information.

## **SECTION I UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 History**

The University of Houston-Downtown is a public undergraduate university, beginning limited expansion into graduate programs. It was established in 1974, when the assets of the private South Texas Junior College were transferred to the University of Houston. By 1979, the Texas Legislature approved the new institution as a separate entity within the University of Houston System. In 1983, the name was changed to the University of Houston-Downtown. UHD's One Main Building was constructed in 1929 on the banks of White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou as the Merchants and Manufacturers Building, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The University's first degree program was a B.S. degree in criminal justice. The University's earliest offerings were career-entry programs but over the years its degree inventory has been expanded to provide students a wide range of academic options. UHD offers excellent educational opportunities through a wide variety of bachelor's and master's degree programs in four colleges: Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, Public Service, and Sciences and Technology. In addition, UHD has University College, which is responsible for assisting students in their academic progress until they officially declare a major.

Today, with more than 10,000 students, UH-Downtown is the second largest institution in the University of Houston System, which includes a total of four distinct universities: UH-Downtown, the University of Houston, UH-Clear Lake, and UH-Victoria. All four institutions are governed by the UH System Board of Regents. The chief administrative officer at each university is the president of that component university. The UH System is headed by a chancellor who also serves as president of the University of Houston.

During the late 1990s, the UHD's facility grew with the addition of the Academic Building—comprised of more than 40 classrooms and lecture halls, the Technology Teaching and Learning Center, the Wilhelmina Cullen Robertson Auditorium, and a food court—and the Jesse H. Jones Student Life Center, a building devoted to student health, recreation, and fitness. The most recent additions to the campus's physical plant are a new classroom and academic building at the corner of Main and Commerce and the renovated Willow Street Pump Station facility on San Jacinto Street. The Commerce Building houses the College of Public Service Building while the Pump Station has meeting and exhibition space. In the next few years, UHD will expand its campus through construction of a new building on Shea Street to accommodate its growing student body.

The University's dynamic campus is located in downtown Houston, at the northern-most station in METRO's new light rail line, and is easily accessed from all major freeways.

With its dedicated faculty, small classes and innovative course options, UHD emphasizes excellence in teaching and student success.

UHD is nationally recognized for its outstanding academic opportunities, including its accredited programs and productive community partnerships. One result of UHD's successful partnerships is the total number of scholarships generated through donations from corporations, foundations, and individuals. Nearly \$2 million in scholarship aid was awarded to deserving students in the 2004-2005 academic year. Flexible schedules and class options (including face-to-face, online, live interactive television, and videotape courses) make higher education available to students throughout the Houston metro area. UHD also participates in partnerships to deliver academic programs with the UH System at Sugar Land and Cinco Ranch and with five universities at the University Center in The Woodlands. Classes are also taught at San Jacinto College North. The Weekend College and evening classes put a college education within reach for students with full-time jobs. UHD prepares individuals to thrive in the multicultural workplace of the 21st century through interaction with its student population, which is diverse in every sense of the word – in ethnicity, age, financial background, and life situation. *U.S. News and World Report* names UHD one of the nation's most ethnically diverse institutions of higher learning.

The third floor of the One Main Building offers a “one-stop” student service center, demonstrating UHD's commitment to serve students more efficiently and effectively. Students can get information about UHD, register for classes, seek financial aid and scholarship information, meet with advisors, and pay fees in one area. Students can also go online to handle some of the “business” of going to college, by accessing student e-services on UHD's website, <http://www.uhd.edu/>. Through e-services, students can update personalized information, check admission and enrollment status, check their payment status, pay for classes, look at their own class schedules and grades, drop and add classes, and, if eligible, register online. UHD is technologically up-to-date, with state-of-the-art computer labs and a wireless environment throughout the campus.

## **1.2 University Mission Statement**

The University of Houston-Downtown is a public, urban university committed to providing quality academic programs that serve the needs of the multicultural population of Houston and surrounding communities. It offers both undergraduate and a limited number of graduate academic degree programs that enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen fields. Through instructional excellence, creative and scholarly activities, and community involvement, the University contributes to the business, scientific, economic, technological, social and cultural development of the area.

As an urban university, UH-Downtown has a special responsibility to provide educational access to those who have not had access in the past. Through flexible scheduling of courses, the innovative use of technology and distance learning opportunities, and a policy of open admissions at the undergraduate level, the university provides educational opportunities for many who might not otherwise be able to pursue a college degree. To

facilitate the academic success of both its traditional and nontraditional students, the university offers a wide range of support services and recruits a faculty and staff who are dedicated to helping students meet the rigorous standards and requirements of its programs.

In its public service and outreach activities, the University offers numerous pre-collegiate programs as well as continuing education programs that maintain and upgrade specialized skills of professionals employed in the Houston area. Through selected programs, research initiatives, and collaborative efforts, the University also seeks to broaden its domestic and international academic programs and relations.

*Approved by The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, April 21, 2005.*

### **1.3 Accreditation**

The University of Houston-Downtown is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelors and masters degrees.

The Engineering Technology Department's Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology degree programs in Control and Instrumentation Electronics Design, Process and Piping Design, and Structural Analysis and Design, are accredited by the Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc. (ABET).

The teacher education programs are approved by the Texas Education Agency.

The business degree programs of the College of Business are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International).

### **1.4 UH System Administration**

UH-Downtown is one of the four component universities comprising The University of Houston System, the only metropolitan higher education system in Texas. The System's other components are the University of Houston—a nationally recognized doctoral degree-granting, comprehensive research university—and two upper division and master's-level institutions, the University of Houston-Clear Lake and the University of Houston-Victoria. Other components of the System include two teaching centers, UH System at Cinco Ranch and UH System at Sugar Land, as well as KUHT Television, and KUHF Radio. The UH System Administration is headed by a chancellor who also serves as the president of the University of Houston.

### **1.5 Governing Board**

The University's governing board is the UH System Board of Regents, which is composed of nine members (chair, vice chair, secretary, and six members). Every two years, the Governor of the State of Texas, subject to Senate confirmation, appoints three members to the Board of Regents. Each member serves a six-year term.

State-mandated Board responsibilities include: preserving institutional independence and defending each UH System component university's right to manage its own affairs through its chosen administrators and employees; enhancing each university's public image; interpreting the community to each of the universities and the universities to the community; nurturing each university so that each may achieve its full potential within its role and mission; and providing policy direction and clarity of mission to each of the universities.

Additional responsibilities of the board are listed in the bylaws of the Board of Regents.

### **1.6 State Oversight**

As a public university in the State of Texas, UH-Downtown also is subject to the rules and regulations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and to all provisions of the Texas Education Code. Among the Coordinating Board's responsibilities is the responsibility to provide "the information necessary to determine the effectiveness and quality of the education students receive at individual institutions" and also to provide "the basis to evaluate the institutions' use of state resources." To fulfill this responsibility, the THECB has established the [Texas Accountability System for Public Higher Education](#) to collect and report performance measure data for all of the state's 35 public universities. A list of all accountability measures being used to evaluate university performance is shown on the THECB website. The accountability data for UHD measure its performance against goals set by the state as well as against the performances of other state universities.

## **SECTION II**

### **UH-DOWNTOWN'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

#### **2.1 OVERVIEW**

The University has four main administrative divisions: Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Student Services and Enrollment Management, and Employment Services and Operations. The components comprising each division are shown on the UHD Organizational Chart, and their functions summarized below. Academic Affairs is headed by a Vice President/Provost who reports to the President. Each of the other administrative divisions is headed by a vice president who reports directly to the President. In the following sections are brief descriptions of each division's responsibilities, their components, and the services they provide. Additional information about these administrative offices can be found through the university website.

Several representative bodies exist on campus that are not a part of the University's formal administrative structure but which play an important role in its governance. All UHD faculty are represented through the UHD Faculty Senate, established to provide members of the faculty an instrument for cooperative action in attending to matters of shared university governance and such professional goals as the members may select. Each academic department elects representatives to the Senate (with the number of departmental representatives proportionate to the size of the department's tenured and tenure-track faculty). The Senate meets twice every month during the fall and spring academic semesters. Among its responsibilities are selecting the faculty members of the University's shared governance committees. By policy, an agenda of business to be considered by the Senate shall be posted publicly and distributed to the faculty assembly at least one week prior to each regular meeting. More information about the Senate is available through the [Faculty Senate](#) website.

The other major representative bodies at the University are the University Staff Council and the Student Government Association (SGA). The Staff Council works to "promote a positive and meaningful interchange among staff, faculty, and students; to promote recognition of the staff's contribution to the mission of the University of Houston-Downtown," while the purpose of the SGA is to serve as the official forum for the expression of student opinion. Further information is available on the [Staff Council](#) and the [SGA](#) websites.

#### **2.2 PRESIDENT'S OFFICE**

As the Chief Executive Officer of the University, the President provides overall direction, planning, supervision, advocacy, and financial management for the University, including strategic planning, resource allocation, facilities management, and policy development. The President meets regularly with his Executive Council to exchange information and coordinate the implementation of university activities. Members of the President's Executive Council include the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Vice President for Student Services and

Enrollment Management, the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations, the Executive Director of University Advancement, the Associate Vice President for Planning and Policy, and the Executive Assistant to the President.

### **2.2.1 Office of University Advancement**

Located within the President's Office is the Office of University Advancement, whose mission is to secure the necessary resources to fulfill the University's mission and provide leadership and service by promoting the University's identity. The Office of University Advancement carries out its mission through the following operational units: Alumni Relations, Development, and Communications and Marketing.

## **2.3 DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and Provost is responsible for overseeing the University's total educational program, including curriculum development; academic standards in the colleges of the University; supervision of the library, continuing education, academic advising, and placement; and publication of the *Handbook for Faculty*. The VPAA/Provost serves on the University of Houston System's Provosts' Council, which reviews all new program proposals coming from the component universities of the UH System and oversees those system-wide academic initiatives including supervision and oversight of the UH System off-campus sites that involve all of the universities within the System. Reporting directly to the VPAA/Provost are the College Deans, the Library Director, the Associate Vice President for Planning and Analysis, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Executive Director of Distance Education, the Academic Affairs Business Manager, the Director of the English Language Institute (ELI), the Director of the Applied Business and Technology Center (ABTC), and the Director of Reservations and Events Management. The Provost meets regularly with the Academic Deans Council, which functions in advisory body on all academic matters. Members include the College Deans, the Library Director, the Associate Vice President for Planning and Policy, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Executive Director of Distance Education

### **COLLEGE STRUCTURE**

The four degree-granting colleges are the College of Business, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Sciences and Technology, and the College of Public Service. A fifth college, the University College, does not administer degree programs but serves as the college for all entering students and students who have not declared a major.

Each college is headed by a dean who is responsible for the personnel and the program administration of the college. As the chief academic administrators of their respective colleges, deans oversee curricula development, student advising, and personnel, and they supervise the overall use of funds, including preparation of the College budget and College plan. More detailed information on the administrative structure of each college can be found on the college's website.

The four degree-granting colleges house a total of ten academic departments. Each academic department is headed by an elected chair who is responsible for general

departmental affairs and has authority in matters concerning appointments and non-reappointments, promotions and tenure, resource allocation, and all other matters relative to the successful implementation of the department's educational and scholarly objectives. The Chair consults with, and seeks the advice of, appropriate committees of the faculty with respect to educational policy and departmental governance. The chair selection process is described in PS 10.A.17 (Appointment of Department Chairs)[does this need to be a link?]. The chair is responsible also to the Dean of the College and other officers of the University for implementing university policies and procedures as they apply to the department.

The academic departments of each of the four colleges are listed below along with the degree programs offered by each department. The main components of University College are also shown along with brief descriptions of their responsibilities.

### **2.3.1 College of Business**

The College of Business is comprised of the department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration and the department of Finance, Accounting and Computer Information Systems.

#### Management, Marketing and Business Administration (MMBA)

The Management, Marketing and Business Administration Department offers the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree with majors in:

- Administrative Management
- General Business
- Management
- Marketing
- Supply Chain Management

The MMBA Department also offers minors in:

- Administrative Management
- Energy Management
- General Business (available only to non-Business majors)
- Management
- Marketing
- Metro-Entrepreneurship
- Professional Land Management
- Retail Management
- Small Business Management
- Supply Chain Management

#### Finance, Accounting and Computer Information Systems Department (FACIS)

The Finance, Accounting and Computer Information Systems Department offers the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree with majors in:

- Accounting
- Computer Information Systems
- Finance
- International Business

The FACIS Department also offers minors in:

- Accounting
- Computer Information Systems
- Economics
- Finance
- International Business

### **2.3.2 College of Humanities and Social Sciences**

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences is comprised of the departments of Arts and Humanities, English, and Social Sciences. In addition to the majors and minors listed under its component departments, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and has minors in Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies.

#### Arts and Humanities Department

The Arts and Humanities Department offers the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with majors in:

- Communication Studies
- Humanities
- Spanish

The Bachelor of Science (BS) degree is offered with a major in:

- Interdisciplinary Studies

The Arts and Humanities Department also offers minors in:

- Art
- Arts Administration
- Communication Studies
- Drama
- Spanish

In addition to its academic programs, the Arts and Humanities Department oversees the O'Kane Gallery, which is located on the third floor in the One Main Building. Gallery exhibits are coordinated to present a rich and varied fare of mixed media works by local, national, and international artists.

### Social Sciences Department

The Department of Social Sciences offers the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with majors in:

- History
- Philosophy
- Social Sciences

The Bachelor of Science (BS) degree is offered with majors in:

- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Social Sciences

The Social Sciences Department also offers minors in

- History
- International Relations
- International Politics
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Quantitative Methods in Research
- Sociology

### English Department

The English Department offers the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with a major in English and the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree with a major in Professional Writing. Minors are also offered in these two areas.

At the graduate level, the English Department offers a Master of Science (MS) degree with a major in Professional Writing and Technical Communication.

### **2.3.3 College Of Public Service**

The College of Public Services is comprised of the departments of Criminal Justice and Urban Education.

### Criminal Justice Department

The Criminal Justice Department offers the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree with both a major and a minor in Criminal Justice. In addition, the department houses a Training Division that is one of the largest criminal justice training centers in Texas.

At the graduate level, the Criminal Justice Department offers the Master of Science in Criminal Justice and the Master of Science in Security Management

### Urban Education Department

The Urban Education Department offers the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies. Post-baccalaureate Teacher Certification programs are offered in the areas of:

- Early Childhood–Fourth Grade Elementary Generalist
- Early Childhood–Fourth Grade Bilingual Generalist
- Fourth–Eighth Grade Elementary Generalist
- Fourth–Eighth Grade Bilingual Generalist (check with the Department of Urban Education for availability of program)
- Fourth–Eighth Grade Language Arts/Social Studies Specialist (check with Department of Urban Education for availability of program)
- Secondary (grades 8-12) (undergraduate degrees to be obtained in content-area department)

At the graduate level, the Urban Education Department offers the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree with majors in:

- Elementary Education (with certification)
- Bilingual Education (with certification)
- Secondary Education (with certification)
- Curriculum & Instruction (for certified teachers only)

### **2.3.4 College of Sciences and Technology**

The College of Sciences and Technology is comprised of the departments of the Computer and Mathematical Sciences, Engineering Technology, and Natural Sciences.

### Computer and Mathematical Sciences Department

The Department of Computer and Mathematical Sciences (CMS) offers the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree with majors in:

- Computer Science
- Applied Mathematics
- Quantitative Methods

Computer and Mathematical Sciences Department also offers minors in:

- Applied Mathematics
- Applied Statistics
- Bioinformatics
- Computer Science

### Engineering Technology Department

The Engineering Technology Department offers the Bachelor of Science in Engineering

Technology (BSET) degree with majors in:

- Control and Instrumentation Electronics Design Technology
- Safety and Fire Engineering Technology
- Process Piping Design Technology
- Structural Analysis and Design Technology

#### Natural Sciences Department

The Natural Sciences Department offers the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree with majors in:

- Biology
- Biological and Physical Sciences
- Biotechnology
- Chemistry
- Industrial Chemistry
- Microbiology

Natural Sciences Department also offers minors in:

- Bioinformatics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Geology
- Microbiology
- Physics

#### **2.3.5 University College**

University College provides the following programs and services for those baccalaureate students who have not yet decided on a major field of study.

##### Academic Advising Center

Advisors in the Academic Advising Center guide students as they complete the university's general education curriculum and then select a degree plan. Academic counselors work with students to enhance their university experience and academic success.

##### The Learners Community

The Learners Community is a program that provides support for freshmen facing the challenges of adjusting to the university environment.

##### Community Outreach Programs

University College also coordinates programs in public schools that help build the collegestudents of the future, including Talent Search and Upward Bound.

### Disabled Student Services

Disability Services provides support and makes arrangements for accommodations for students with disabilities.

### Articulation Services

The articulation agreements between UHD and the area community colleges are based on UHD degree requirements, core curriculum requirements for both UHD and the community colleges, and the degree requirements for the community colleges. The final result is a series of transfer guides that provide a curricular roadmap for community college students wanting to transfer to UHD with the maximum of number of community college hours counting toward a UHD degree.

## **OTHER COMPONENTS OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### **2.3.6 W. I. Dykes Library**

The W. I. Dykes Library is located on the fifth floor of the One Main Building and provides books, journals, and audiovisual materials to meet the informational, educational, and lifelong learning needs of the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Houston-Downtown. Library users may visit the library in person or access the library's holdings and databases from off-campus through the library's website. In addition to UHD resources, faculty, staff, and students have full borrowing privileges at the libraries at the other University of Houston System campuses. Library users may also obtain a TexShare Card from the UHD Library Circulation Desk, allowing them to check out books at most Texas academic libraries. For more information about TexShare, please call the Circulation Desk at 713-221-8186. For more information about Interlibrary Loan, call 713-221-8184. To schedule a Library Instruction session or to ask a research question, please call the Reference Desk at 713-221-8187.

### **2.3.7 Office of Distance Education**

Reporting to the Provost, the Executive Director of Distance Education (EDDE) provides overall coordination for the distance education programs. The Distance Education Coordination Council serves in an advisory capacity. Members include the associate deans of each degree-granting college, the Dean of University College, the distance education librarian, the advisor/coordinators from each center, the executive director of enrollment services, the executive director of student services, and the director of technology planning and project management and is chaired by the EDDE. All courses delivered online or via ITV comply with the "Principles of Good Practice for Academic Degree and Certificate programs and Credit courses Offered Electronically." The distance education plan of UHD was approved by THECB on February 14, 2005.

The colleges and departments retain responsibility for scheduling courses and faculty and for maintaining quality of instruction.

As part of its commitment to increasing access to higher education, UH-Downtown makes courses and programs available to students at various sites in the Houston metropolitan area and online. These sites include the University of Houston System at

Sugar Land, the University of Houston System at Cinco Ranch, and The University Center in The Woodlands in Montgomery County. Courses at the three centers are delivered both face-to-face and via interactive video-conferencing technology. Each off-campus center is staffed by a UHD Advisor/Coordinator who provides student advising and support services as well as other operational support.

Online courses provide an important alternative enrollment access opportunity for students at the UHD One Main campus as well as the centers. While the courses and programs available through distance education are available to all students, they are designed particularly to meet the needs of students who begin their college work at the area community colleges. The university utilizes the WebCT platform for delivery of online courses, as well as to support delivery of instruction in on-the-ground courses at all locations. The university focus for fully online courses is on upperdivision and graduate courses. Students have access online to the upperdivision courses necessary to complete a BBA in General Business.

### **2.3.8 Office of International Education**

The Office of International Education helps support the University's international initiatives through the collection and dissemination of information and by overseeing the University's Study Abroad Scholarship program. Faculty members contemplating leading a study-abroad program should consult with the Associate Vice President for Planning and Policy and secure and complete the necessary approval forms before publicly advertising the program.

### **2.3.9 Institutional Research and Planning**

The mission of the Office of Planning and Analysis is to provide the planning and institutional research support needed by the University to carry out its mission in an effective and efficient manner. The office supports the mission of the University by the following activities:

- Coordination of the planning process for the institution.
- Coordination of the process of assessing institutional effectiveness for the University.
- Provision of institutional research support for the institution as a whole and for various academic and administrative units.
- Preparation and submission of mandated federal and state reports that are necessary for legislative funding.
- Preparation and submission of the institution's responses to national surveys, questionnaires and other non-routine requests for data or information.
- Assistance to department faculty in preparing grant proposals and to departments undergoing accreditation reviews.

### **2.3.10 Continuing Education**

The Division of Continuing Education consists of the following two units:

### Applied Business & Technology Center

The Applied Business & Technology Center is a self-sustaining, non-credit-granting center of the University of Houston-Downtown. The Center's mission is to provide quality, continuing higher education to the public; to provide quality research and consulting services to industry and to the public; to provide services leading to the improvement of the community; to provide personal and professional opportunities for University faculty, staff, and departments; and to contribute to the expansion and improvement of the University of Houston-Downtown. The Center is designed to offer courses in applied business and technology at levels varying from entry through advanced and extends to a Compu-Camp for precollegiate students in the summer. The Center courses are taught on-campus as well as off-site. The Center also develops and delivers customized courses for business and industry.

### English Language Institute

The English Language Institute (ELI) offers four different programs to assist non-native speakers develop their English Language skills. University academic credit is not awarded for the courses in this Institute. The Institute's four programs designed as follows:

- International students with academic objectives choose the ELI Intensive English Program, and many add an Afternoon Elective if desired.
- Companies interested in training their employees choose the ELI Business English Program, and Programs for the Houston Business Community.
- International professionals choose the ELI Business English Program.
- Houston community residents choose the ELI Intensive English Program and many add an Afternoon Elective if desired.

#### **2.3.11 Community Relations and Conference Services**

This department has the primary responsibility to develop and coordinate various meetings, conferences, and special events for the University and the external community. The department serves as the coordinating point for the effective implementation of arrangements for university and external conferences by working with service providers such as hotels, local entertainment and restaurants, security, facilities, IT/Media, and parking. The staff shares on-call and event monitoring response for VIP and major university events including those scheduled for evenings, weekends, and during university breaks.

#### **2.4 DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

Basic administrative services and business operations of the University are the responsibility of the Vice President for Administration and Finance. The major units within the Administration and Finance area are listed below along with a brief description of their functions. Follow the links to the website of each office for more information about its functions and the policies it is responsible for administering.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

The Administrative Services Office is responsible for all budget, purchasing, and contract administration activities.

### **2.4.1 Budget and Planning**

The Budget Office is responsible for the production the Legislative Appropriations Request, the Executive Budget Summary, Budget Preparation, and the Budget Book. The Budget Office has an ongoing role in monitoring and maintaining cost centers, distributing account statements, maintaining the chart of accounts, effecting budget transfers, preparing federal and state reports, and providing internal *ad hoc* reports. Please call 713-221-8620 for information about budget matters.

### **2.4.2 Purchasing**

The role of the Purchasing Department is to procure quality goods and services in a timely manner and to obtain them at the lowest possible price. See [PS 05.C.01](#) *et seq.* for applicable policies and call 713-221-8606 for additional information.

With limited exceptions, purchases over \$2,500 should be made by the Purchasing Department. The first step for initiating a purchase on behalf of the University is to obtain requisition forms from the mail center in Room 117-North. Before being submitted to Purchasing, requisitions must be filled out in detail, including proper cost center numbers and authorized approvals. Call extensions 8606, 8607, or 8062 for assistance with completing requisitions and with rules that may apply to specified funds. Also, numerous catalogs and vendor lists are available for referencing in Purchasing, which is located in Room 947-South.

### **2.4.3 Contract Administration**

This office is responsible for drafting, reviewing, revising, and negotiating contracts on behalf of the University; advising originating departments on the type of contract to be used; and maintaining files and preparing reports on contracting activity. This office also serves as the University's primary contact in dealing with major auxiliary service providers, including the bookstore, food service, and vending.

#### Bookstore

Textbooks are sold through the University of Houston-Downtown bookstore, located in Room 351 North on the third floor of the One Main Building. In addition to purchasing books on site, students can order by fax or through the bookstore website. The bookstore sends instructions for ordering textbooks to academic departments several months before the start of each semester. Ordering deadlines should be adhered to in order to ensure that texts will be available for student purchase prior to the start of classes. The UHD bookstore also handles books for all online courses and operates a seasonal bookstore at UHS-Sugarland for the courses at that campus and at UHS-Cinco Ranch. A bookstore located at Montgomery College provides books for courses at The University Center (TUC). The Distance Education Office coordinates bookorders for TUC. UHD employees receive a discount on most purchases made at the bookstore upon presentation of a valid University of Houston-Downtown identification card. Call 713-221-8025 for more information.

### Food Services

Several dining options are available to UHD employees and students at the campus food court located on the third floor of the Academic Building, and a coffee cart operates during limited hours at the Commerce Building. For your convenience, food, candy, and drink vending machines are located throughout the campus. Food items are also available in the UHD Bookstore.

### **2.4.4 Business Affairs**

The Office of Business Affairs provides various business and financial functions to the University community. The major functions include accounts payable/data entry; student accounting; the cashier's office; general, state and grant accounting; and property management.

### Accounts Payable

The Accounts Payable Office is responsible for safeguarding University assets by ensuring that goods and services purchased by university departments are paid for in a timely manner and in accordance with the State of Texas and UHD policy and procedural guidelines.

### Travel Office

The UHD Travel Office was developed to consolidate all functions of UHD travel processing. Their main objective is to provide optimum travel services to UHD staff, faculty, students and contractors, at the least possible cost. The UHD community benefits from "one stop shopping" for all travel needs, and from the elimination of additional research and paperwork when making travel arrangements. Additionally, hotel, plane and rental car reservations made through the travel office are direct billed to the university.

### Student Accounting

The Student Accounting Office is responsible for the billing and collection of student fees and tuition, recording and disbursement of outside scholarships, and the collection and charge back of returned checks.

### Cashier's Office

The Cashier's Office is responsible for accepting payments made to the University. This includes payments made by students for university bills, student telephone charges, and repayment of student loans. Payment made by departments include reimbursements, program fees, and a wide variety of miscellaneous transactions. The Office provides a check-cashing service to employees. With a valid University of Houston-Downtown identification card, employees may cash personal checks up to \$50 at the check-cashing window located on the third floor, Room 355-North.

### Property Management

The Property Management Accounting office has seven main functions:

- Identification of availability of equipment
- Facilitation of recording and tracking of asset records

- Calculation of depreciation
- Issuance of reports to management and sponsors
- Management of the physical inventory of capital and sponsor-owned assets
- Liaison with property auditors
- Provider of guidance to departments, faculty, and staff regarding issues related to property administration and inventory.

### Grant Accounting

The Grant Accounting office administers grants awarded to UHD. This includes meeting with Principal Investigators (PI's) on existing projects; monitoring allowability of costs; meeting financial reporting requirements; ensuring compliance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars; and providing timely and accurate financial information to external funding providers, PI's, and UHD management.

### **2.4.5 Facilities Management**

The Facilities Management Department is responsible for all building, campus, and parking lot maintenance and operations; housekeeping; key issuance and control; electrical and mechanical operations; renovations and construction; shipping/receiving; fleet management; and mail services. All requests for service or work should be made by contacting the Facilities Management Department, Room 101 South, or by calling 713-221-8026.

### Mail and Inter-Campus Courier Services

A full range of mail services is available to employees from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to use in conducting University business. The mail center is located on the first floor in Room 117-North. To schedule the services of an inter-campus courier, or to get more details about mail services, call 713-221-8616. All mail to and from the three off-campus centers is sent via private courier on a regular schedule through the Office of Distance Education.

### Receiving Office

Personnel in the Receiving Office, located in Room 116-North, accept and deliver packages to departments in the University and make shipments upon request. The office is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call 713-221-8049 for rates and other information.

### **2.4.6 Information Technology**

Information Technology is organized into six operating units and a management unit. The management unit is comprised of an Office of Technology Planning, Projects and Budgets. The units work collaboratively, performing their functions and services in a project based format. They share resources and personnel as needed. Project teams include members of the UHD user community.

### Information Technology Management and Administration

Information Technology Management directs projects, planning, and business management for the division. The management team oversees day-to-day operations and

provides guidance to all operating units. They work closely with university and state officials to provide effective technology services and ensure that requirements set forth by the State are continually met.

#### Administrative Applications

Administrative Applications is responsible for the development, maintenance, and support of the University's key administrative applications (e.g. Banner Student Records System and PeopleSoft). This group provides services in computer programming, database administration, user training, and user support. They facilitate the activities of the Administrative Technology Services (ATS) user group, which sets priorities for administrative application development

#### Computing, Telecommunications, and Video Network Infrastructure Services

The Computing, Telecommunications, and Video Network Infrastructure Services conduct hardware installation, repair, replacement, connection, monitoring, and training services for the University's computer and telephone equipment. It also supports and maintains the University's video network infrastructure.

#### Technical Services

Technical Services is responsible for the management, operation, and security of the University's enterprise servers (NT, Unix, and VMS) and the network infrastructure. The Technical Services group ensures a reliable and efficient computing environment for on and off-campus faculty, staff, and students by collaborating with other Information Technology units.

#### The Technology Teaching and Learning Center

The Technology Teaching and Learning Center (TTLC) houses the Instructional Technology and Multimedia/ITV Services groups. It offers a wide range of services in a well-equipped and comfortable environment including: consulting on the design, development, and revision of educational materials; full-service video production and editing; technical support; access to development tools and reference materials; training workshops and seminars; a showcase for product demonstrations and evaluations; and Instructional Technology Grants to support faculty projects. This group also facilitates the activities of the Instructional Technology Services (ITS) user group.

#### Instructional Technology

Instructional Technology supports the faculty and staff in their efforts to successfully use and understand the many new technology tools and strategies at their command. They assist faculty in the development and implementation of interactive technologies, which increases the effectiveness of their pedagogy and also support, administrative reengineering efforts.

#### Multimedia/ITV Services

Multimedia/ITV Services provides instructional support services for the faculty, students, and administration. Its prime responsibilities include supervision and coordination of University distance learning television courses; audio, video and multimedia production;

audio visual equipment scheduling and circulation; operation of University presentation facilities; and campus photography. The department's creative production services are also used to support the Office of the President in implementing marketing, recruitment, and University outreach activities.

#### User Support Services

User Support Services is responsible for providing technical support and help desk services for faculty, staff, and students. This group is also responsible for making sure that University faculty and staff members have up-to-date PCs with standard software applications by implementing an on-going program of maintenance and scheduled replacement of computer hardware and software.

#### Academic Computing Lab

The Academic Computing Lab provides computer systems and support to all UHD students, faculty, staff and alumni. The primary function of the lab is to provide computing resources and user support for instructional and research activities.

#### **2.5.7 Police**

The prime objective of the [UHD Police Department](#) is to provide a safe and protected environment for people and property on the campus. University police provide 24-hour police services, escort staff to their cars upon request, and provide vehicle assistance services to the UH-Downtown community. Police call boxes are located in all elevators and near all entrances and exits to the One Main Building, the Academic Building, the Commerce Street Building, and the Student Life Building. Call boxes are also located at the entrance to and exit from the parking garage and all student parking lots. Activate any call box to get assistance. To report suspicious persons or activities and criminal offenses to the Police Department, call 713-221-8911 for emergency assistance; non-emergency calls should be directed to 713-221-8065.

#### Parking Regulations and Permits

All parking at the University of Houston-Downtown is by permit. Permits and information about parking on campus may be obtained in the Parking Office, Room 354-North, or call 713-221-8127.

#### Lost and Found

A lost and found service is operated by the University Police Department, in the Police Dispatch Office, Room 118N. Call 713-221-8065 for assistance.

#### **2.4.8 Sponsored Research**

The Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) provides encouragement and assistance to faculty and staff who engage in sponsored research intended to extend knowledge for the University community and the greater community that the institution serves.

For research to be sponsored by the University, the proposer must hold a full-time appointment at the University at the time the research is proposed. The University

administers all sponsored research and contracts in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. A faculty or staff member who receives funds for research must comply with the rules, regulations, restrictions, and requirements imposed by federal law, the granting agency, the State of Texas, the University of Houston System and the University of Houston-Downtown. Questions regarding sponsored research should be directed to the appropriate department/unit supervisors and managers and OSP at Extension 8681. See PS 06.A.06, Guidelines for the Administration of Sponsored Research.

## **2.5 DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

Programs and services of this division include Admissions and Records, Student Development, Career Services, Counseling Services, Scholarships and Financial Aid, Student Activities, Testing Services, and Student Health Services. The following programs and services may be of special interest to the faculty:

### **ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

The goal of Enrollment Management is to effectively recruit, enroll, and retain students by coordinating the offices responsible for admissions, recruitment, financial aid, records and registration. It strives to achieve these services in a user-friendly environment that supports the educational mission of the University.

#### **2.5.1 Admissions**

The Office of Admissions is responsible for implementing the University's admission policy (PS 03.A.24). The Office strives to make the enrollment process as convenient as possible for all students.

#### **2.5.2 Registrar**

The Registrar's Office maintains all student academic records including registrations and grades. The responsibility of this office is to provide reliable service and academic data to all UH students, faculty, and staff as well as to state and federal agencies. The Registrar's Office issues transcripts and diplomas and certifies loan deferments and Veterans' benefits.

#### **2.5.3 Scholarships and Financial Aid**

The UH Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid offers a variety of financial aid programs to assist undergraduate and graduate students in meeting educational costs, including scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study, which may be awarded in various combinations and amounts to meet individual student needs. Most federal and state aid is awarded on the basis of proven financial need rather than academic achievement. Most scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic achievement, talents, and special skills rather than proven financial need.

#### **2.5.4 Transfer Center**

The Transfer Center provides transfer students a point of reference where their needs can be met throughout the recruitment and enrollment process as well as in the first year of

study at UHD. Through coordinated collaborations between the Academic Affairs and Student Services & Enrollment Management Divisions of the University, the Transfer Center provides support services and staff who are dedicated to helping the growing number of transfer students gain access to UH Downtown's quality academic programs. With continuous assessment and evaluation, the Transfer Center will determine the greatest needs of our transfer students during the admissions and enrollment process and implement and improve services to ensure a seamless and successful transition to UHD.

## STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services division plays a key role in developing the campus culture and environment by engaging students in collaborative activities and services. It coordinates numerous efforts such as the Student Government Association, campus organizations, student awards and recognitions, career counseling, testing, recreational sports and wellness services, health services, campus information, orientations, tours, and graduation ceremonies.

### **2.5.5 Counseling, Career and Student Health Services**

#### Counseling Center

Academic counselors are available to provide assistance and guidance to students on academic issues. Counselors work with students on setting goals, managing time, arranging for tutoring in selected subjects, and dealing with unforeseen difficulties that may jeopardize academic success. Support programs are also available to help students with physical and learning disabilities.

#### Career Services

Using cutting-edge technology, Career Services offers support, information, and counseling to students and alumni who wish to explore their career options. This office can help students develop academic and extracurricular programs to support and enhance career options through such tools as interest inventories and temperament indicators, available both in the Career Services Resource Center and on the Internet. Career Connections, our online resume bank and job-listing site, lends itself well to today's proactive, self-directed job search. Information about labor markets, salary trends, and career options is also available. In addition, UHD's Field Experience program offers qualified students the opportunity to integrate classroom learning with work experience, granting up to six semester credit hours to students working in their field of study.

Information regarding this program as well as other services is available in the Career Services Office, Suite 370-N.

#### Student Health Services

Student Health Services provides medical information and limited healthcare services at no or low cost to students, faculty, and staff. Advanced-practice nurse practitioners and registered nurses staff the facility. For further information, call ext. 8137 or visit Room 380-North.

### Student Assistance Program

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is designed to help students maximize their health and effectiveness at home, school, or work. Through this program, they receive confidential, personal support for a wide range of issues, from everyday concerns to serious problems.

Whether they want advice about a financial concern, need to talk to someone about drug use, or are simply feeling overwhelmed by school life, SAP can help. They have access to both online and in-person support for a wide range of issues. If students want to ask a question or request a service, a toll-free number is provided. They will be immediately connected to an experienced clinician. Available anytime, these clinicians are experts in helping people identify the nature of their problems and finding the right resources to address them. All records, including medical information, referrals and evaluations, are kept confidential in accordance with federal and state laws.

#### **2.5.6 Sports and Fitness**

Faculty members have access to the three-level, 30,000-square-foot Student Life Center, which includes facilities for basketball, volleyball, badminton, indoor soccer, aerobics, martial arts, dance, weight equipment, and cardiovascular units. Programs are offered throughout the year. Lockers and showers are available. A valid UHD ID card is required for admittance to the Center. For more information call 713-221-8566.

#### **2.5.7 Student Activities and Events**

The Office of Student Activities sponsors a variety of activities designed to get students involved with other students and with the greater Houston community. Faculty members serving as advisors to student organizations should be familiar with the *Student Organization Handbook* that is published by the office.

UHD PS 09.B.02 (Posting of Notices and Announcements) gives Student Activities approval authority over the posting of signs, notices, and posters in the lobby and corridor areas of the institution. In order to post material, individuals, and organizations are responsible for (1) submitting material for approval 24 hours in advance of posting, (2) posting material only in designated areas, (3) observing all criteria for posted material, and (4) removing posted material by the specified deadline. This policy excludes the posting of material on bulletin boards maintained by specific departments and organizations.

## **2.6 DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND OPERATIONS**

The University of Houston-Downtown's Employment Services and Operations (ESO) department is responsible for attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining employees who are genuinely committed to promoting the University's mission and core values of excellence, opportunity, and diversity. ESO is committed to serving the needs of its various constituencies by providing guidance in matters of University personnel policies and procedures. The ESO Office is divided into the following eight functional areas.

### **2.6.1 Affirmative Action Compliance**

The University's affirmative action officer investigates affirmative action complaints and oversees the development and implementation of the UHD Annual Affirmative Action Plan. To ensure compliance with Federal Affirmative Action Federal Regulations, a representative from this area meets with all faculty search committees to review the committee's obligations while recruiting applicants.

### **2.6.2 Benefits**

The Benefits area provides employees with assistance in the following:

- Enrollment in Benefits for eligible employees
- Consultation on benefits-related issues
- New hire orientation
- Determination of eligibility for enrollment in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or the Optional Retirement Program (ORP)
- Enrollment or changes in the Employee Retirement System
- Administration of Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Monitoring of sick/vacation pay for employees on FMLA
- Processing Workers' Compensation claims through the State Office of Risk Management
- Processing unemployment claims through the Texas Workforce Commission
- Exit interviews
- Information on the termination process

### **2.6.3 Compensation and Compliance Reporting**

The Compensation and Compliance Reporting area is responsible for the following functions:

- Implementing salary structure in accordance with UHD compensation policy
- Performing job and salary analysis
- Recommending salary and raise adjustments for classified personnel
- Creating job descriptions
- Counseling department supervisors and administrators on staff compensation administration and policy
- Creating reports and conducting queries using PeopleSoft
- Managing departmental website

### **2.6.4 Employment**

The Employment area handles the following functions:

- Advising departments and search committees on hiring policies and procedures
- Posting open positions and tracking applicant information using PeopleAdmin
- Handling recruitment ads
- Overseeing security-sensitive background investigations
- Ensuring compliance with all federal, state and university requirements for immigration
- Processing paperwork for all new hires
- Administering PeopleAdmin system training

### **2.6.5 Payroll**

The Payroll area is responsible for the following functions:

- Personnel Action Request (PAR) processing information verification
- Distributing, processing and verifying timesheets
- Generating new job codes and position numbers
- Handling all University payroll matters
- Processing of miscellaneous forms including but not limited to address changes, W-4 forms, Direct Deposit and others

### **2.6.6 Peoplesoft**

The functions of the PeopleSoft area include:

- Developing, assigning, and approving security classes for PeopleSoft HR at UHD
- Developing End-user training and other training materials
- Supervising Payroll and Benefits operations

### **2.6.7 Records**

The Records area performs the following functions:

- Maintaining employee documentation
- Organizing office equipment inventory
- Verifying employment
- Providing clerical support
- Providing On-site notary public service

### **2.6.8 Retirement Counseling**

Retirement counseling is provided by the Director of Employment Services and Operations. The Retirement Counseling area assists employees with:

- Processing retirement documents
- Certifying salary, service and vesting information for TRS and ORP
- Gathering information on investment options
- Monitoring 403 (b) and 457 plan contributions for IRS compliance

### **2.6.9 Mental Health Services**

Employment Services and Operations helps to meet employees' mental health needs by providing referral services to outside agencies. This cooperative effort enables employees to present their concerns to a licensed professional in a confidential environment. Referrals to appropriate resources, either on campus or in the Houston Community, will be made. Please call 713-221-8676 or stop by Human Resources, Suite 910 South for more information.

## SECTION III FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

### **3.1 University Commitment**

Members of the faculty of the University of Houston-Downtown have a special obligation to understand the nature of this institution of higher learning and its urban mission. They should demonstrate a commitment to the effective carrying out of the mission and the achievement of institutional goals. They should strive to improve the intellectual and practical effectiveness of the University by willing and thoughtful participation in its governance.

### **3.2 Awareness of Basic University Policies and Procedures**

Faculty members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with basic university policies and procedures. UHD's formal policy system divides policy statements (also called "PS documents") into the following categories: Administration (01), Personnel (02), Academic Matters (03), Student Affairs (04), Financial Affairs (05), Grant Administration (06), Property Management (07), Information Systems (08), Institutional Advancement (09) and Faculty (10). Of particular importance to faculty are those policies governing academic matters (03) and faculty affairs (10). The current version of all PS documents can be found on the UHD website at <http://.uhd.edu/about/hr/policies.htm>. The policies established by the UH System Board of Regents for all components of the University of Houston System can also be accessed through the University of Houston System website at <http://www.uhsa.uh.edu/regents/policy/>. Additionally, pursuant to authority delegated from the Board of Regents, the UH System has established policies that apply to all components of the system. These can be accessed through the University of Houston System website at <http://uh.edu/sam/>. In addition to these institutional policies, faculty members are also responsible for knowing and following the policies and procedures established by their respective colleges and departments.

### **3.3 Shared Governance**

University policy dictates that academic personnel should have primary responsibility for developing those policies that directly affect the academic environment. PS 01.A.03 (Academic Shared Governance Policy) describes the procedures through which representatives of the faculty and administration work together on the policies governing academic and faculty affairs. Although education is a dynamic process, change must be orderly. At UHD, changes in policies are made according to the procedures prescribed in PS 01.A.03. Faculty members are responsible for learning about the University's shared governance process and how they are represented in it. While faculty members are free to criticize and seek alteration of official policies and practices by duly constituted procedures, they are not free unilaterally to suspend, alter, or ignore them. Administrators and staff are similarly bound by the University's official policy statements and are expected to seek to make any changes only through the formal shared governance process.

### **3.4 Committee Assignments**

The principle of shared governance requires that faculty members, in addition to fulfilling their teaching and research responsibilities, accept a reasonable share of committee and other service-related assignments in carrying out university activities. When appointed or elected to serve on a committee or other university body, faculty members are expected to attend meetings and prepare for them in a way that will ensure their active and effective participation. Since the department is the primary unit of organization and the basic academic administrative unit within the University, faculty members have a special responsibility to assist in the orderly functioning of their respective departments.

### **3.5 Teaching Responsibilities**

All faculty members are expected to perform their teaching duties fully and conscientiously. Faculty members are expected to conduct their assigned courses in a professional manner consistent with the course's catalog description, scheduled meeting times, and approved course credit. Faculty members shall cover the subject matter of the course, as announced to students in the syllabus and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum. Faculty members have a responsibility to treat students fairly and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to intellectual inquiry, learning, and rational discussion.

### **3.6 Meeting Classes**

It is the duty of all faculty members to meet regularly with their assigned classes. Classes should be held for the full time period for which they are scheduled. No faculty member may reschedule or cancel a course section without the permission of the department chair. If a faculty member must miss an assigned class because of illness or other reasons, he or she should notify the department chair promptly. If a faculty member must be away from the campus for several days or more, he or she shall confer in advance with the department chair to make appropriate arrangements for class coverage.

### **3.7 Ordering Textbooks**

Textbook orders are submitted on forms provided by the University Bookstore in either paper or electronic form. Each department establishes its procedure for ordering books consistent with bookstore procedures and deadlines. Faculty members should adhere to the department procedures and deadlines when submitting their textbook requests to ensure that books will be available for students before the first day of class. The bookstore does not provide faculty members with desk copies; these should be obtained by writing directly to the publisher. Course packs developed by the faculty and printed by the UHD Copy Center or an off-campus copy center may be sold through the University Bookstore. When working with publishers' representatives, faculty members should be aware of the UHS Administrative Memorandum on [Conflict of Interest](#) (SAM 02.A.09) and (BOR 59.08) and should be very careful to avoid the appearance that they are receiving some personal benefit from the books they are requiring students to purchase.

### **3.8 Final Examination Policy**

As part of the class schedule, a fixed schedule for final examinations is provided. The final examination schedule provides a two and a half-hour period for each examination. The length of the final examination, up to a maximum of two-and-a-half hours, is at the discretion of the instructor. Final examinations are to be given at the time provided in the schedule and are not to be rescheduled under any circumstances. Faculty who are teaching courses classified as online courses who require a proctored exam or a face-to-face presentation cannot schedule those activities in conflict with the university final exam schedule. They may schedule these activities during the Reading Days.

### **3.9 Reading Days**

The last two days of the term prior to each final-examination week are designated as reading days to provide students with extra time to review the materials covered during the course of the semester and prepare for their final examinations. Faculty members may schedule optional review or study sessions during reading days but should not hold required class sessions or examinations during this time (except for online courses as noted in 3.8).

### **3.10 Assigning Grades**

Each faculty member has the academic freedom and responsibility to determine grades according to any method, chosen by the faculty member, that is professionally acceptable, communicated clearly on the syllabus, and applied to all students equally. Prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation by a faculty member is a violation of a student's rights and is a valid ground for a grade appeal. Only those grades recognized in UHD's PS 03.A.04 on the Grading System (<http://www.uhd.edu/about/hr/PS03A04.pdf>) can be awarded. Not all grade options can be used in every course. Faculty members should be thoroughly knowledgeable of all sections of PS 03.A.04 and follow its provisions in the assignment of grades.

### **3.11 Reporting Grades**

Final grades must be submitted on the web through the Faculty E-Services menu. Faculty members are responsible for meeting the deadlines for submitting grades to allow time to process grades, to notify students, and to verify final graduation requirements. Students obtain their grades through the Student E-services menu or by phone. No grade reports are mailed to students. In keeping with federal privacy laws (discussed below in Section 3.13), instructors must not post grades publicly, even in coded form. Faculty may verify grades and correct grade discrepancies online before final submission of the grades. After submission, grade discrepancies are corrected by the faculty member filing out a "Change of Grade" form and filing it with the department office. The department office will then process it, obtaining all necessary signatures and sending it to the Office of the Registrar.

### **3.12 Retention of Examinations and Other Graded Material**

Faculty are expected to retain all unreturned papers, including examinations and term papers, for a period of one calendar year, in order to ensure a basis for possible grade

appeals. A faculty member should be willing to discuss any unreturned graded material at the request of a student.

### **3.13 Faculty Compliance With Federal Privacy Laws**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This amendment, sometimes referred to as the “Buckley Amendment,” establishes the following student rights:

- The right to “inspect and review” his or her institutional records.
- The right of “an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of their school records.”
- The right of privacy for student records.

Parents who provide more than half of a student's financial support may have access to academic information if the “Parent's Request for Academic Eligibility Information” form is on file in the appropriate dean's office or in the Center for Academic Advising. Students may authorize access to other individuals only through a written consent form, which must be signed by the student and remain in the student's file. Faculty must not discuss a student's performance with anyone other than the student and appropriate UHD academic personnel unless the form is signed. A faculty member must not post grades by using students' names, social security numbers, or any other symbols that could divulge the identity of the students, announce the names of students and the grades they made on tests in class, or leave graded material in public areas (e. g. halls) for student pick-up.

### **3.14 Course Assignments**

The department chair is responsible for assigning courses and sections to be taught by a faculty member. As an urban university serving a diverse range of students, UHD offers evening and weekend courses as well as courses at different off-campus sites. Faculty members are expected to be available to teach at any time or place department courses are offered and for which they are qualified to teach. The institution's primary obligation is to schedule courses that meet student needs in a manner that makes the most efficient use of university resources.

### **3.15 Classroom Changes**

There are regular procedures by which classrooms are requested, assigned, and the assignments published. Adherence to these procedures ensures up-to-date information on classroom usage during a term for reporting to THECB and facilitates the location of a student or faculty member in an emergency. Room changes can only be made by the department chairman.

### **3.16 Classroom Management**

Faculty members are responsible for maintaining a proper classroom learning environment. Unruly or disrespectful behavior on the part of students should not be tolerated. Rules regarding unacceptable classroom behavior should be communicated to students at the beginning of the semester. Under ideal circumstances, food and beverages should not be consumed in a classroom, nor should students bring to class young children or other individuals who are not officially registered students. Especially stringent rules regarding food and drink exist for computer-equipped classrooms and science

laboratories. Faculty members should not allow classroom activities to disrupt adjoining classes and should vacate the classroom in a timely fashion to allow the next scheduled class to begin promptly.

### **3.17 Course Evaluations**

Student course evaluations will be conducted for all organized sections at the end of each long semester as described in PS 03.A.26. All faculty are expected to schedule a time when the evaluations are to be given and to give students advance warning that evaluations will be given. The University expects faculty members to adhere strictly to the prescribed procedures for administering evaluations, procedures which are described in the evaluation packet.

### **3.18 Reasonable Accommodations for Students With Disabilities**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 stipulates that disabled students must be accommodated so that they may achieve at a level at which they are capable. For students to be entitled to accommodation, they must register with the Office of Disabled Student Services (409-South, 713-226-5227). ODSS will evaluate the student and provide instructions to the faculty member concerning the accommodation to be provided. Faculty members are expected to cooperate with the staff of the ODSS in providing students with disabilities with reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

### **3.19 Academic Honesty Code**

To maintain the academic integrity of the University, faculty members should take all reasonable actions to prevent students from engaging in any form of academic dishonesty. The University's Academic Honesty Policy ([PS 03.A.19](#)) describes the process that should be followed when faculty members suspect students of engaging in some form of academic dishonesty. All faculty members are expected to support this policy and follow its procedures for penalizing offenders.

### **3.20 Office Hours**

All faculty are expected to maintain regularly scheduled on-campus office hours in which they are available for student consultation. These hours should be scheduled at times that students are most likely to be able to consult with faculty consistent with the teaching schedule. Office hours are to be posted, listed on course syllabi, and submitted to the department office at the beginning of each semester.

### **3.21 Syllabi**

Faculty members are responsible for distributing to the students enrolled in their classes a course syllabus at the beginning of each new term in compliance with PS 03.A.29. Syllabi may be distributed in hard copy form in class or electronically through a course website. The exact format of course syllabi will be determined by the faculty of each department, but all syllabi must include certain basic information that accreditation agencies and other oversight bodies have determined that students have the right to know. This information includes:

### **3.21.1 Course Identification Information**

Each will list the course name and number, CRN (Course Routing Number), the semester and year in which it is being offered, and any course or other prerequisites.

### **3.21.2 Instructor Contact Information**

Each course syllabus will list the name of the instructor, the instructor's contact information, office number, and office hours.

### **3.21.3 Basic Content and Evaluation Criteria**

Each syllabus will state the course's catalog description and list the course's basic objectives and expected learning outcomes. The syllabus will describe the method of evaluation to be used including the weight assigned to tests, projects, and other activities used in determining the course grade.

### **3.21.4 Course Outline and Tentative Schedule**

Each syllabus will list the major topics in the order in which they are to be covered along with a tentative schedule.

### **3.21.5 General University Policies and Procedures**

Each syllabus will contain a statement that all students are subject to the UHD Academic Honesty Policy and to all other university-wide policies and procedures as they are set forth in the UH-Downtown University Catalog and Student Handbook. Each syllabus will also include a statement that reasonable accommodations will be made for those students with disabilities covered by the Americans With Disabilities Act.

### **3.21.6 Class Policies**

Each syllabus will state any additional policies that might have a significant impact on a student's performance such as policies on class attendance, tardiness, the acceptance of late work, and make-up exams.

Faculty members also must turn in a copy of their course syllabi to the department office, where a file is maintained of the most current syllabus for every course section offered.

## **3.22 Class Records**

An accurate, understandable record of class performance must be kept on each student for a minimum of five years. When faculty members terminate their employment with the University, their class record books should be left with the department chair.

## **3.23 Class Rosters**

Faculty members may print out updated class rosters for their classes at any time during the semester through Faculty E-Services. No hard copies of class rosters will be distributed by Enrollment Services. Before meeting their classes for the first time, faculty members should print out a temporary class roster to determine students who are officially enrolled. Class attendance should be carefully checked the first two weeks of

class. All students must be officially registered by the official census date (the 12<sup>th</sup> day of classes during the long semesters) to insure state funding. If there are students attending class who are not on this roster, the director of enrollment services should be notified immediately. Students must not be permitted to attend class if they cannot produce documentation showing that they have registered and paid for the class.

### **3.24 Academic Responsibility**

Faculty are expected to remain current in their fields, as evidenced by such endeavors as research, creative/scholarly activity, curriculum development, participation in the professional life of their disciplines, dissemination of the results of research and scholarly activities, and performance in creative endeavors. The fundamental responsibilities of faculty members as teachers and scholars include maintenance of competence in their fields of specialization and the exhibition of such competence in lectures, discussions, publications, and other professionally recognized venues or media.

### **3.25 Professional Development**

The University expects faculty members to continue their professional development through research, scholarly writing, advanced study, consulting, or original creative production as appropriate to their disciplines. Such activities derive their importance both from the contribution they make to classroom performance and from their role in making the University a crucible for the discovery or application of new knowledge, the synthesis of ideas, and other creative activities. Joint faculty-student projects have particular educational value and are strongly encouraged.

### **3.26 Documentation of Professional Accomplishments**

The University conducts both annual performance reviews and periodic evaluation reviews as a part of the promotion and tenure process. Faculty members should review both the University's policy on promotion and tenure ([PS 10.A.01](#)) and the policy on performance evaluations ([PS 10.A.05](#)) as well as the policies of their respective colleges and departments. It is the faculty member's responsibility to prepare documentation called for in these policies and to submit them to the appropriate review bodies. The collection and maintenance of accurate records and the documentation of professional accomplishments should be an ongoing activity to ensure that performance reports are as accurate and comprehensive as possible.

### **3.27 Service Responsibilities**

Faculty membership presumes service to the University itself and to the greater society of which the University is a part. Fulfillment of these responsibilities may be evidenced by such activities as serving on University committees, serving as an advisor for a student organization, providing assistance to pre-college educational institutions and to other community organizations, serving as an officer in a professional organization, or performing service that draws on the faculty's professional expertise.

### **3.28 Responsibility to Colleagues**

As colleagues, faculty members have obligations that derive from common membership in a community of teachers, scholars, and professionals. These obligations include:

- Helping to maintain an atmosphere conducive to philosophical speculation, free inquiry, the reasonable interpretation of data, and the uncensored exchange of views;
- Acknowledging ideas that belong to others;
- Striving for objectivity when evaluating colleagues for initial appointment, promotion, tenure, and general performance;
- Showing due respect for the opinions, rights, accomplishments, professional activities, safety, and property of others;
- Conscientiously meeting agreed-upon obligations;
- Refusing to tolerate egregious examples of unacceptable professional conduct.

### **3.29 Professional Ethics**

3.29.1 The University expects all faculty to adhere to the ethical standards set forth in the 1987 American Association of University Professors Statement on Professional Ethics.

#### 1987 American Association of University Professors Statement on Professional Ethics

**I.** Professors, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end professors devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although professors may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry.

**II.** As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Professors demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Professors make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom.

**III.** As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas professors show due respect for the opinions of others. Professors acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.

**IV.** As members of an academic institution, professors seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. Although professors observe the stated regulations of the

institution, provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain their right to criticize and seek revision. Professors give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it. When considering the interruption or termination of their service, professors recognize the effect of their decision upon the program of the institution and give due notice of their intentions.

### **3.30 Commencement Exercises**

Commencement exercises are held in December and in May, with scheduled dates listed in the *Class Schedule*. A faculty presence is an important component of commencement exercises, and attendance is a courtesy to graduating students, their families, and invited speakers. Faculty are expected to participate in at least one of the Commencement Exercises each year. Academic regalia, the attire for Commencement Exercises, may be rented or purchased through the University Bookstore at the expense of the individual faculty member.

### **3.31 Contract Dates**

All faculty on 9-month appointments are expected to be available one week prior to the beginning of each semester. The appointment period ends after the completion of all assigned duties (usually after grades are submitted electronically to the Registrar's Office).

### **3.32 Maintaining a Correct Mailing Address for Purposes of Official Notifications**

Faculty members are responsible for providing their department office and the Office of Employment Services and Operations with a current mailing address. Written notices regarding tenure and termination shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. Notice shall be complete when deposited in the United States mail and addressed to the last address given by the faculty member.

### **3.33 Notice of Intention to Resign**

Faculty members have the responsibility to provide due notice of intent to interrupt or terminate their institutional employment within a reasonable time period or the time provided by contractual agreement. A faculty member not planning to return for the next academic year should give written notice to the dean of his or her college no later than May 15.

### **3.34 Use of Equipment and Facilities**

Faculty members have a duty to provide students proper instruction in the use of required University equipment and facilities and to provide appropriate supervision to ensure that the equipment and facilities are being properly used and maintained. Instructors should report any equipment or facilities problems immediately. Students should be made aware of all appropriate safety standards. If classroom furniture and/or teaching equipment is rearranged for a particular class, the faculty member is responsible for returning the items to their original location at the end of class. Marker boards should also be erased at the end of each class period. Faculty should take care to re-lock the classroom upon completion of a class in a room that is required to be locked other than during class times.

### **3.35 Commitments on Behalf of the University**

Faculty members are responsible for following established UHD and System policies when applying for grants, negotiating agreements with other institutions, or taking any action that involves a commitment of university resources or imposes any sort of obligation on the University. As a general rule, faculty do not have authority to enter into any written or verbal agreement which commits university resources or imposes any sort of obligation on the University.

### **3.36 Official Representation**

Faculty members enjoy the same rights of free expression as do all American citizens, but they must be careful when exercising these rights to make clear when they are speaking or writing as private citizens and not as representatives of the University. Under no circumstances should faculty members use university stationary, postal services, e-mail accounts, computers or telephones for political or lobbying purposes.

### **3.37 Consulting and Outside Employment**

Each faculty and professional staff employee is accountable to the University of Houston-Downtown for 100% of the duties associated with the basic appointment. Before accepting any outside employment, including teaching at other institutions either inside or outside the UH System, employees are expected to consult with, and to obtain written approval from, their supervisor under the provisions outlined in UH-Downtown/PS 02.A.04 (<http://www.uhd.edu/about/hr/PS02A04.pdf>). As noted in the policy, it is designed to supplement BOR Policy 59.02 (formerly 01.A.09), Consulting and Paid Professional Services.

### **3.38 Student Absences on Religious Holy Days**

In accordance with the Texas Education Code 51.911, a student who is absent from classes in observance of a religious holy day shall be permitted to make up examinations and/or assignments provided the student notifies his or her instructor by the audit class day that he or she will be absent for a religious holy day. "Religious holy day" shall mean a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. Notification of planned absences must be in writing and must be delivered by the student to the instructor of each class affected by the absence. Instructors may refer any questions regarding the qualification of the absence to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

### **3.39 Use of Technology**

Faculty are provided desktop computers in their offices equipped with standard productivity software. The IT Services Handbook is a useful reference document providing information on setting up your phone, faculty access, technical assistance, training opportunities, multimedia access to support instruction as well as information about WebCT access and e-classroom reservations. Faculty are responsible for using the equipment consistent with state law.

## SECTION IV GUIDE TO UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### 4.1 Policy Overview

Major policies of the University of Houston-Downtown and the University of Houston System have been formally codified as [UHD Policy Statements](#) (PS documents) or as [UHS Administrative Memoranda](#) (SAMS). Faculty members should also be aware of the [policies](#) and [bylaws](#) of the UHS Board of Regents that also govern employment. Additionally, faculty are employees of the State of Texas, and subject to all applicable state laws and regulations.

The process through which university policies are developed, organized, maintained, organized, and distributed is described in PS 01.A.01 [UH-Downtown Policy and Procedure System](#). The [Academic Shared Governance Policy](#) (PS 01.A.03) describes the shared governance procedures through which representatives of the faculty and administration work together on policies directly affecting the academic environment. The policy recognizes that academic personnel should have primary responsibility for developing those policies that directly affect the academic environment. In developing these policies, processes should be followed which encourage a free and open exchange of ideas, promote collegiality, and ensure understanding and consideration of all institutional perspectives. The processes followed should also provide mechanisms for deciding issues in a timely and accountable manner.

[UHS Administrative Memoranda](#) are organized into the categories of General Administration, Human Resources, Fiscal Affairs, Audit Function, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Information Services, Institutional Advancement, and Governmental Relations.

The major subdivisions of the Board of Regents [bylaws](#) are: [Authority and Responsibility of the Governing Board](#), [Responsibility & Organization of the System](#), [Officers of the Board](#), [Committees of the Board](#), [Meetings of the Board](#), [Communications With the Board](#) and [Amendment of Bylaws](#). The [policies](#) of the Board of Regents are organized under the following headings: [General](#), [Executive](#), [Academic and Student Affairs](#), [University Advancement](#), [Audit](#) , and [Administration and Finance](#).

### 4.2 Academic Policies

A brief description of those policies setting forth the University's basic academic rules and procedures are listed below. The full text of each policy can be called up through the hyperlink.

**PS 03.A.01 [Honorary Degrees](#).** This PS describes the procedures by which recommendations for honorary degree recipients are made to the University of Houston System Board of Regents. These procedures are consistent with the policy on honorary degrees approved by the Board.

**PS 03.A.02 [Placement and Course Sequencing](#).** This PS states the policy of the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) on the placement of students and the appropriate sequencing of their courses. Exceptions to this policy for the special interest, non-degree-seeking student are made at the discretion of the department chairman and the appropriate dean.

**PS 03.A.03 [Auditing Courses](#).** The purpose of this PS is to set forth policies about and procedures for auditing courses at UHD.

**PS 03.A.04 [Grading System](#).** This PS describes the grading system used at UHD.

**PS 03.A.05 [Dean's List](#).** This PS states the UHD policy and procedures related to compiling and publishing the Deans' List, which recognizes undergraduate students who have achieved superior academic performance during the fall or spring semester.

**PS 03.A.06 [Graduation and Commencement](#).** This PS describes requirements and procedures for graduation and commencement.

**PS 03.A.07 [Academic Probation and Suspension](#).** This PS states UHD's probation and suspension policy.

**PS 03.A.08 [Academic Amnesty](#).** This PS states UHD policy regarding the granting of academic amnesty.

**PS 03.A.09 [Subsequent Enrollment](#).** This PS states the UHD policy on the subsequent enrollment of students.

**PS 03.A.10 [Acceptance of Transfer Credit](#).** This PS establishes uniform university policies and procedures for the analysis and evaluation of college credits earned at other institutions of higher education to be transferred to UHD. This PS further specifies guidelines and procedures to be followed by students wishing to transfer credit to UHD.

**PS 03.A.11 [Credit by Examination](#).** This PS sets forth policies and procedures for obtaining credit by examination.

**PS 03.A.12 [Annual Review and Update of Course Inventory](#).** This PS standardizes the procedure by which the course inventory is reviewed and updated each year.

**PS 03.A.13 [Approval Procedure for New Degree Programs](#).** This PS standardizes the procedure by which new degree programs are developed and outlines the review process by which they are approved.

**PS 03.A.14 [Procedure for Approval of New Courses](#).** This PS standardizes the procedure by which new courses are added to the course inventory.

**PS 03.A.15** [Procedure for Approval of Alteration to Courses](#). This PS standardizes the procedure by which alterations are made to courses currently listed on the course inventory.

**PS 03.A.16** [UHD Library Circulation Policy](#). This PS defines the categories of users of the W. I. Dykes Library at UHD and sets forth the rules governing the loaning of library materials to these users.

**PS 03.A.17** [Directed Studies Policy](#). This PS states the UHD policy on directed studies courses.

**PS 03.A.18** [Library Interlibrary Loan Policy](#). This PS states the interlibrary loan policy of the UHD library.

**PS 03.A.19** [Academic Honesty Policy](#). This PS states the UHD policy on Academic Honesty and procedures to be followed.

**PS 03.A.20** [Approval Procedure for Non-Substantive Degree Program](#). This PS standardizes the procedure by which non-substantive degree program requests are developed and outlines the review process that will occur prior to their approval.

**PS 03.A.21** [Field Experience](#). This PS states the University of Houston-Downtown policy and procedures relating to all forms of field experience.

**PS 03.A.22** [Access to Student Academic Records/Information](#). This PS outlines the policy of the UHD on the release of information from student records in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

**PS 03.A.23** [Protection of Human Subjects](#). This PS sets forth the review and approval process for all research projects affiliated with or conducted at UHD involving human subjects.

**PS 03.A.24** [Admission of Students](#). This PS states the UHD policy on the admission of undergraduate and graduate students.

**PS 03.A.25** [Academic Freedom](#). This policy provides a statement of the privileges and responsibilities of its faculty in regards to academic freedom.

**PS 03.A.26** [Student Course Evaluations](#) This PS states the UHD policy on student course evaluations.

**PS 03.A.27** [Approval Process for Degree Minors](#). This PS standardizes the procedure by which degree minors are developed and outlines the review process by which they are approved.

**PS 03.A.28** [Satisfactory Progress for Students Enrolled in Developmental Courses](#). This PS states UHD policy on satisfactory progress as it pertains to

students enrolled in developmental education courses and describes the actions that will be taken when students do not maintain such progress.

**PS 03.A.29 [Course Syllabi](#).** This Policy Statement describes the faculty member's responsibility for content and distribution of course syllabi.

**PS 03.A.30 [Shortened Format Courses](#).** This PS sets forth the conditions that must be met when offering courses in a shortened format.

### **4.3 Faculty Affairs Policies**

The PS documents found in Section 10 (Faculty Affairs) of the UHD PS Manual pertain specifically to faculty members. These Faculty Affairs policies are briefly described below.

**PS 10.A.01 [Rank and Tenure System](#).** This PS delineates policies and procedures for the rank and tenure system of the University of Houston–Downtown (UHD). These policies and procedures are consistent with the role and scope of the institution.

**PS 10.A.02 [Faculty Grievance Procedures](#).** This PS describes the procedure by which University of Houston - Downtown (UHD) faculty members can file a formal grievance and the process by which such grievance is resolved.

**PS 10.A.03 [Academic Appointments](#).** This PS outlines ranks and titles used in academic appointments at the University of Houston - Downtown (UHD). Full-time academic appointments at UHD are made using ranks and titles common throughout the University of Houston System. Part-time academic appointments are made using ranks and titles appropriate to the particular academic mission and programs of UHD and consistent with the traditional practices of academia.

**PS 10.A.04 [Faculty Teaching Workload](#).** This PS defines the policy for faculty teaching workload at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD).

**PS 10.A.05 [Faculty Performance Evaluations](#).** This PS states the policy and procedures for faculty performance evaluations, whose primary goals are to promote the highest standards of professional excellence, to provide a record of individual achievement, to promote professional development, and to increase the administrators' awareness of the professional activities of the faculty.

**PS 10.A.06 [Faculty Dismissal Policy and Procedures](#).** This PS defines and explains the various reasons for dismissal and establishes guidelines to be followed in instances of dismissals for academic cause, moral turpitude, medical reasons, financial exigency, or elimination of degree programs or departments for reasons not mandated by financial exigency. The specific guidelines outlined in this policy do not deny the faculty member's right to file a specific grievance as guaranteed by PS 10.A.02 Faculty Grievance Procedures.

**PS 10.A.07 [Faculty Non-Reappointment](#).** This PS states the procedures to be followed in cases of non-reappointment of faculty members during the probationary appointment period prior to the time a tenure decision is made.

**PS 10.A.08 [University Funded Faculty Development Leaves](#).** This PS describes the purposes of the faculty development leave program at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD) and the process through which leaves are granted.

**PS 10.A.09 [Faculty Salary Adjustments](#).** This PS states the policy and procedures for faculty salary adjustments based on faculty performance evaluations, promotion in rank, additional assigned duties and inequities based on current academic market demands and/or salaries of comparable faculty within the institution.

**PS 10.A.10 [Granting Emeritus Status to Faculty/Benefits of Emeritus Status](#).** This PS establishes guidelines for granting emeritus status to faculty and defines the benefits associated with emeritus status.

**PS 10.A.11 [Annual Evaluation of Department Chairmen](#).** This PS sets forth the process for annual evaluation of department chairmen at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD). The process is designed to promote accountability, enhance professional growth, and supply information that will assist in the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of administrative performance.

**PS 10.A.12 [Annual Evaluation of Academic Deans](#).** This PS sets forth the process for annual evaluation of academic deans at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD). The process is designed to promote accountability, enhance professional growth, and supply information that will assist in the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of administrative performance.

**PS 10.A.13 [Faculty Employment Policies](#).** This PS outlines the policies and procedures for employment of faculty at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD) and specifies the tenets underlying the process, the responsible parties, and the sequence of steps.

**PS 10.A.14 [Faculty Leaves Not Funded by the University](#).** This PS outlines the procedures to be used for reviewing requests for leaves without pay and the criteria for evaluating those requests.

**PS 10.A.15 [Adjunct Lecturers](#).** This PS establishes university policies governing the employment and use of adjunct lecturers. While adjunct lecturers constitute a significant component of the university's teaching work force and have a critical role to play in carrying out the university's urban mission, the university remains committed to reducing its reliance on adjunct faculty. Adjunct lecturers include all those teaching personnel holding the adjunct lecturer title as defined in Section 2.2.5 of PS 03.03.

**PS 10.A.16 [Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty](#).** This PS describes how the University complies with state and system policies regarding the performance evaluation of tenured faculty.

**PS 10.A.17 [Appointment of Department Chairs](#).** This PS describes the terms of appointment for department chairs and the process to be followed in making such appointments.

The following policies are also of importance to faculty in the course of their employment. Unless otherwise noted, all references are to UHD Policy Statements.

**02.A.03 [Nepotism](#).** This Policy Statement explains the nepotism policy and related employment procedures of the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). This PS conforms to the policy approved by the University of Houston System Board of Regents for the University of Houston System and all of its component campuses. This policy statement has been developed to avoid possible conflict of interest, which could result from related persons exercising peer judgment or administrative review of matters pertaining to employment, retention, promotion, or salary determination.

**02.A.04 [Outside Employment of Faculty/Professional Staff](#).** This PS describes the university regulations on outside employment of faculty and professional staff of the University of Houston - Downtown.

**02.A.05 [Additional Compensation for Faculty and Professional/Administrative](#).** The basic policy on extra compensation for university employees is set by the Texas Legislature and the University of Houston System Board of Regents; this PS supplements that basic policy by providing policies to cover specific groups of academic personnel at UH-Downtown.

**BOR 21.08 [Intellectual Properties](#).** This Board of Regents' Policy provides the framework governing intellectual property rights flowing from research and intellectual endeavors by university faculty, staff and students that result in the invention of new technology or the creation of new copyrighted material.

**BOR 31.01 [Governmental Appearances](#).** This policy of the Board of Regents governs employee appearances before governmental boards and other entities.

**BOR 59.02 [Consulting and Paid Professional Services](#).** This Board of Regents' policy sets out the conditions under which full-time members of the faculty and professional or administrative staff may engage in external consultation or other paid professional services, provided such activities benefit the system and contribute to the professional development of the individual. Failure to comply with this policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action including reprimand, suspension, or termination.

**BOR 59.08 [Conflicts of Interest](#).** This policy of the Board of Regents applies to all members of the board and employees of the system and its component institutions and provides that they shall adhere to and be furnished a copy of the Statutory Standards of Conduct for State Employees, Section 572.051, Texas Government Code, and shall avoid conflicts of interest, generally described as the use of one's university employment or

position to obtain unauthorized privileges, benefits, or things of value for oneself or others. It includes a detailed list of potential conflicts.

**SAM 02.A.29 [Ethical Conduct of Employees](#).** This policy sets forth a code of accountability for component university employees in the performance of their component university responsibilities; it identifies areas of particular legal and ethical concern and specifies requirements for compliance with state laws, federal guidelines, Board of Regents policies, standards of ethics, and good business practices.

**SAM 05.A.01 [Student Reservists Called to Active Duty](#).** Recognizing the economic hardship and personal sacrifice for students called to active duty by a reserve branch of the United States Armed Forces, this System Administrative Memorandum describes the options available for student reservists called to active duty during the semester.

**SAM 07.A.02 [Ethical/Legal Use of Micro/Personal Computer Software](#).** The purpose of this administrative memorandum is to establish a policy for the legal use of micro/personal computer software.

#### **4.4 Other University Policies**

The [UHD Staff Handbook](#) reviews a number of additional policies, with which all employees of UHD should be familiar. In the Staff handbook you will find summaries of a number of personnel and workplace policies that apply to both faculty and staff. The full text of all UHD policy statements can be found at the [UHD Policy Statements](#) section of the [UHD website](#). UHD's PS documents are organized into the following ten categories:

[Administration](#)

[Personnel](#)

[Academic Matters](#)

[Student Affairs](#)

[Financial Affairs](#)

[Grant Administration](#)

[Property Management](#)

[Information System](#)

[Institutional Advancement](#)

[Faculty](#)

#### **4.5 Required Approval/Disclosure Forms**

##### **4.5.1 Consulting and Outside Employment**

A faculty member who has an opportunity to engage in outside consulting or outside employment should review UHD PS 02.A.04, [Outside Employment of](#)

[Faculty/Professional Staff](#) to determine if the proposed consulting/employment activity falls under the policy. If it does, the faculty member should obtain and complete an "[Application and Approval of Consulting and Outside Employment](#)" and submit it to the department chair and dean. Permission for outside employment is left to the discretion of the University in accordance with the provisions of UHD PS 02.A.04.

#### [University of Houston System Administrative Memorandum \(SAM\) 02.A.10](#)

Disclosure of Related party Interests – requires that all faculty and staff in a position to originate purchase requests or influence purchasing decisions shall annually complete a disclosure statement regarding related-party interests. The Vice President for Administration and Finance sends out a *Consulting and Professional Services Reporting* form and a *Related Party Disclosure* form to be completed by all full-time benefits-eligible faculty and exempt staff at the beginning of each academic year.

#### **4.5.2 Dual Employment Inside the UH System**

A faculty member with another employment opportunity within the UH System should obtain and complete a [Dual Employment](#) form and submit it to the department chair and dean. Permission for dual employment is left to the discretion of the University in accordance with the provisions of UHD PS 02.A.04.

#### **4.5.3 Approval/Notification Procedures for Overnight Faculty-Led Student Travel in the U.S.**

Faculty wishing to organize and lead educational travel programs involving overnight stays must complete the [Domestic Educational Travel Approval Form](#) and secure the approval of those administrators listed on the form. Approval is required whenever the individual organizing the program is acting in his or her capacity as a UHD faculty member or promoting the program as being under the sponsorship of, or carrying the endorsement of, the University. Approval is required even if the trip does not involve the granting of any academic credit and is funded by non-university monies.

#### **4.5.4 Approval/Notification Procedures for Study Abroad Programs**

Faculty wishing to organize and lead foreign travel groups must complete a [Study Abroad Program Planning and Approval Form](#) and secure the approval of those administrators listed on the form. Approval is required whenever the individual organizing the program is acting in his or her capacity as a UHD faculty member or promoting the program as being under the sponsorship of, or carrying the endorsement of, the University. Approval is required even if the trip does not involve the granting of any academic credit and is funded by non-university monies.

#### **4.5.5 Application for Vacation, Sick Leave and Emergency Leave**

Faculty must obtain and complete an [Application for Leave](#) form when they miss work.

The University's leave policies are described in the following policy statements: [02.A.08](#) (Sick Leave Policy), [02.A.09](#) (Miscellaneous Leave Policy) and [02.A.11](#) (Family and Medical Leave Policy).

#### **4.5.6 Independent Study**

A directed studies course is any credit course in which a student works directly with a faculty member on an individual basis. After the faculty member and student agree on the advisability of such a course and on the particulars (requirements, meeting times, grading, etc.), the faculty member and student complete a [Directed Studies Request](#) according to the provisions of the [Directed Studies Policy](#) and forward it on to the department chair and dean for approval.

#### **4.5.7 Academic Honesty Report**

The University's [Academic Honesty Policy](#) states that "faculty members are responsible for knowing the principles and procedures of the Academic Honesty Policy, and for enforcing the policy when academic honesty violations occur." When acts of academic dishonesty are committed, the procedures outlined in the policy are to be followed including the completion and filing of the Academic Honesty Report that is attached to the Academic Honesty Policy.

## SECTION V GUIDE TO EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

### **5.1 Overview**

The University of Houston-Downtown offers a variety of fringe benefit programs to its faculty members as part of their employment and compensation package. As an employee, you select benefits that may be individualized to meet your needs and those of your dependents. Automatic state benefits include vacation, sick leave, paid holidays as approved by the President, leave with or without pay, a retirement program, and longevity pay. Optional benefits that you may select include health and dental insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and a supplemental retirement program. Because benefit provisions can change quickly, all employees are encouraged to consult the [Employee Services](#) website for the latest information on benefits and to check with personnel in Employee Services when they have specific questions or needs.

### **5.2 Eligibility**

A benefits-eligible employee is a regular employee who has a full-time equivalent (FTE) workload of at least 50 percent and an appointment of one semester (4.5 months) or longer. All benefits-eligible employees will be enrolled in the University of Houston health insurance program unless a waiver is executed by the employee. Detailed information on the insurance programs is available in the “Summary of Benefits” booklet and on the [Employees’ Retirement System \(ERS\) website](#). Any questions regarding benefits should be directed to the Benefits Coordinator at 713-221-8443. See also Policy Statement 02.A.12, Employee Fringe Benefits Policy.

### **5.3 Insurance Programs**

#### Health

The University of Houston System is insured through the State of Texas Group Benefits Program (GBP). The Employees’ Retirement System of Texas (ERS) serves as the administrator. The carrier providing benefits is Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX). Effective September 1, 2003, there is a 90-day waiting period for health insurance eligibility for all new employees unless they have transferred directly from another State of Texas agency. All full-time benefits-eligible employees will be enrolled in the group health insurance the first day of the month following the 90-day waiting period unless the employee executes a waiver of coverage. The cost of employee’s health-insurance coverage is paid 100% by the State of Texas. Part time benefits-eligible employees are considered to have an FTE (Full time equivalency) of at least 50% but less than 100%. The part-time employee receives 50% of the state credit toward the health-insurance coverage and must submit an enrollment form in order to be covered under the medical plan. Health-insurance coverage continues for the duration of employment in an insurance-eligible position. A mid-year change in an employee’s FTE will result in a change in the health-insurance cost to the employee. Under certain conditions, continuation of group health insurance to the covered employees and to qualified beneficiaries is available through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA).

### Dental

Dental insurance is available to the new employee and eligible dependents with no waiting period and must be selected within 31 days of employment. If dental coverage is not selected during the initial enrollment period, the employee will have to wait until the next summer enrollment to add dental coverage. Dental coverage may change annually; therefore, it is necessary to check with the Benefits Coordinator or visit the ERS web site to ascertain the accuracy of the policy data and the current dental program benefits.

### Life

A \$5,000 life insurance benefit is included with the health insurance offered to benefits-eligible employees. Employees may choose from several salary based life insurance options that include Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D). In addition to basic term life, Dependent Life with accidental death and dismemberment is available.

### Short- And Long-Term Disability

Both Short-Term and Long-Term disability benefits provide protection against an extended absence resulting from either illness or accident. The benefit amount is 60% of the employee's monthly salary not to exceed a benefit of \$1,800/\$6,000 monthly, respectively for short/long term disability. Short- and Long-Term claims for benefits require certification by a licensed physician and completion of an application form. Waiting periods must also be satisfied for either policy.

### Accidental Death and Dismemberment

This coverage is in addition to any AD&D that the employee may have with the life insurance election. Accidental death benefits are payable to the beneficiary if the employee is involved in an accident and dies within 120 days. Dismemberment means the loss of one or more major limbs of the body.

## **5.4 TexFlex Reimbursement Account**

A TexFlex Reimbursement Account is an IRS-approved, tax-free account that saves you money on eligible health and dependent care expenses. You authorize payroll deposits into your TexFlex Reimbursement Account from your before-tax salary. Then, as you incur eligible expenses, you request withdrawals from your account to reimburse yourself or to pay the provider directly. This money pays for your expenses tax-free. Choose from two kinds of TexFlex accounts: the Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) and the Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA). If you incur both types of expenses, you can establish both accounts. Health Care Reimbursement Account A Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) allows you to set aside tax-free money to cover eligible health care expenditures you make during the plan year. Under the HCRA, you may be reimbursed for eligible expenses incurred by yourself, your spouse, and your dependents. Your dependents need not be covered under your health care plan to benefit from HCRA; however, they must meet the IRS guidelines for qualifying as a dependent.

A Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA) can help you recover some of the money you spend to ensure your dependents (children, adults or elders) are taken care of

while you're working. Generally, a DCRA saves you more in taxes than the Child Care Tax Credit, but it depends on your income.

## **5.5 Retirements Programs**

In accordance with State of Texas law, all benefits-eligible employees are required to participate in one of two retirement programs offered by the University of Houston-Downtown. The programs are the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) and the Optional Retirement Program (ORP).

New employees will have a 90-day waiting period from their hire date before they are eligible to contribute to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or Optional Retirement Program (ORP). Contributions begin on the first day of the month during which the 90-day waiting period ends. ORP eligible employees will have an additional 90 days to enroll in an ORP plan since state law allows ninety days from the eligible date to make a selection.

Contributions to the retirement programs by the employee and employer are a percentage of the gross salary as specified by the state legislature. All retirement program contributions are tax deferred and become taxable income to the employee at the time of distribution to the employee.

### Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)

Participation in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) is open to all benefits-eligible employees of the University. Rights to benefits are vested upon completion of 5 years of creditable service. Currently employees contribute 6.4% of their gross salary monthly and the state contributes 6% of the employee's gross salary to a state account to pay retirement benefits. Employees earn interest at a rate of 5% annually on their account balance. TRS includes life insurance and disability benefits.

"Regular retirement" is available at age 65 with a minimum of 5 years of participation in TRS, or at age 60 when age and service combination equals 80 (i.e. age 60 with 20 years of participation). Members who retire before age 60 will receive a 5% reduction of benefits for each year under 60 (i.e., retiring at age 58 means a 10% [2x5%] reduction of benefits, while retiring at age 56 means a 20% reduction, etc.).

Regular retirement benefits under the standard annuity option are calculated as 2.3% times the number of years membership in TRS times the average salary for the highest five years of participation in the program.

Further information on the TRS program is available in the Benefits Section of the Office of Employment Services and Operations or on the [TRS](#) web site.

### Optional Retirement Program (ORP)

Optional retirement plans are available to full-time (100 percent FTE) benefits-eligible faculty members and certain professional/administrative staff under the provisions of State law. Employees may obtain a list of approved companies and their representatives

from the Office of Employment Services and Operations. It is the employee's responsibility to select a company in which to invest their retirement contributions.

The employee contributes 6.65% of his or her gross salary monthly and the state contributes 6% of the employee's gross salary to the ORP account. Employees who were employed by the State of Texas prior to September 1, 1995 should contact the Benefits Office for information on the amount of state contribution made to their account. Contributions made by the University to the optional retirement program are vested for employees after one year and one day of participation in the program.

Participation in ORP is a one-time election and must be made in writing within 90 days of the date an employee becomes eligible. Eligible employees will be enrolled in the TRS program until an election for ORP participation is made in writing. If an employee does not submit an application for ORP participation before the expiration of the 90-day election period, ORP eligibility is forfeited and the employee must remain in the Teacher Retirement System of Texas for the remainder of their employment in higher education in Texas.

Retirement benefits under the ORP are based on the account value and the age of the participant at the time of retirement. Several distribution options are available to the employee at the time of retirement.

Employees should consult the Benefits Section of the Employment Services and Operations for eligibility requirements and additional information on the ORP program.

#### Supplemental Retirement Programs Tax Deferred Annuity (TDA)

The tax deferred annuity program or supplemental retirement annuity is offered to all benefits-eligible employees. Investments are through life insurance companies and mutual fund companies licensed to do business in the State of Texas. All contributions are excluded from taxable income until distributed from the account to the employee. All contributions to a TDA are made by the employee. The minimum monthly contribution is \$25. An employee can withdraw contributions from the account at separation of service or upon obtaining age 59.

Employees may enroll in TDA at any time, but may change carriers only twice per year.

#### State Of Texas Deferred Compensation Plan (TEXA\$AVER 457 Plan)

Employees may enroll in a TEXA\$AVER 457 Plan, a deferred compensation plan that allows the employee to defer a portion of their income and deposit it with a company approved by the State of Texas. Benefits paid to the employee or beneficiary equal the value of the deferred compensation account. The State's liability will never exceed the value of that account, and the State will not be liable for any losses resulting from depreciation or a loss in the value of the account.