

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders  
From: Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, President  
Subject: Campus Presence and Engagement

UH-Downtown/PS 01.A.17  
Issue No. 1  
Effective Date: 9/1/2025  
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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) is committed to creating a strong campus community that values collaboration, interaction, and excellence in student instruction and mentoring, research, scholarship, and/or creative activity, and university, college, and departmental service. Faculty work takes place in a variety of forms and during periods beyond 8-5 M-F. Examples include evening and weekend teaching activities, teaching preparation, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service ranging from that provided to the department, college, and university as well as that provided locally, nationally, and internationally. It is also essential to the vitality of the University for faculty to maintain a regular on-campus presence so that they may participate in and contribute to campus life.
- 1.2. This policy has been established to comply with the University of Houston-System [SAM 02.A.20](#). [Texas Government Code, Section 658.002](#) that sets provisions regarding the working hours for full-time salaried state employees that apply to faculty and staff. [Texas Government Code, Section 658.010](#) has provisions regarding where work can be performed by state employees that also apply to faculty and staff.
- 1.3. This policy applies to all full-time faculty who hold the titles, at any rank, of promotion-eligible non-tenure track or tenure/tenure-track faculty.
- 1.4. This policy does not apply to faculty who have been formally granted a leave of absence, including leave covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Campus Presence: the active and visible involvement of faculty within the physical campus environment. Examples include but are not limited to: holding regular office hours (in-person and virtual), mentoring students, participating in institutional affairs,

contributing to the sense of campus community, and creating a learning environment that supports student success.

- 2.2. Full-time Faculty Member: faculty members who hold the rank of lecturer, senior lecturer, instructor, clinical assistant professor, clinical associate professor, clinical professor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

### 3. POLICY

- 3.1. Full-time faculty members (hereafter, faculty) are expected to maintain an in-person presence on campus to fulfill their professional obligations to students, colleagues, and the university for the duration of any term in which they are employed at UHD, except for when the University is closed. Faculty employed on nine-month contracts are expected to maintain an in-person presence on campus beginning in the fall semester for at least one week prior to the start of classes through fall commencement, and in the spring semester, for at least one week prior to the start of classes through spring commencement.
- 3.2. Faculty employed to teach summer courses in any modality (e.g., face-to-face, online, hybrid) shall discuss with their Chair the departmental expectations to maintain an in-person campus presence during the summer session(s) in which they teach.
- 3.3. All twelve-month administrative positions with faculty rank (typically some center directors, department Chairs, Deans and above) are expected to maintain in-person campus presence year-round unless the University is closed, they are on approved leave (e.g., sick, vacation, [FMLA](#) or miscellaneous leave), attending a conference, conducting research, scholarly, and/or creative activities, study abroad, or engaging in professional development. All such absences must be approved in advance by the Chair, Dean, or Provost in accordance with [PS 02.A.02](#). Miscellaneous leave types are outlined in [PS 02.A.09](#).
- 3.4. Faculty are expected to hold the number of in-person office hours that are proportionate to the number of classes taught, with a minimum of at least two office hours spread over at least two different days per week during the long fall and spring semesters. Faculty may choose to offer virtual office hours in addition to the in-person office hours as appropriate. Being available for consultation with students outside of

class is an important part of a faculty member's responsibilities. Faculty should be responsive to student-initiated contact by returning emails and other messages within a reasonable period, such as no more than two business days, to facilitate student learning and be consistent with professional practice. The professional practice of holding in-person office hours and responsiveness to students will be noted in the annual evaluation rubric.

- 3.5. In-person office schedules need to be posted in course syllabi and submitted to the respective department Chair and/or Dean at least two days before the start of the long semester.
- 3.6. Summer office hours may be determined by the faculty member in consultation with the department Chair. Typically, there are two in-person office hours per 3 credit hours.
- 3.7. Faculty, department Chairs, and Deans are expected to attend convocation, faculty retreats, faculty departmental and college meetings, commencement, and/or other major University events at which the President and/or Provost have/has requested faculty to be present. If a faculty member will not be able to attend a required campus meeting/event, they should provide their supervisor with timely notification and appropriate reason.
- 3.8. Colleges and departments are expected to conduct University-related business in person on campus and at off-campus instructional sites including, but not limited to, faculty meetings, committees/council meetings, community, or recruiting events.
  - 3.8.1. Faculty may attend off-campus meetings, seminars, conferences, or other professional events and remain in compliance with this policy. This would include serving as a keynote speaker or facilitator at a professional meeting. Written notification, including plans for any classes that will be missed during the time away, in addition to the travel request form, must be submitted to the Chair for approval prior to their absence. This written notification may be an email. Students will also need to be notified of any changes in classes via the LMS and email.
  - 3.8.2. Generally, faculty should conduct their research, scholarly, and/or creative activities on campus. Other locations may be appropriate in certain

circumstances (field trips, off-site research, scholarly, and/or creative activities, meeting with donors, etc.) and would be in compliance with this policy. If these locations are off-campus, their supervisor must be aware and be in approval.

3.8.3. Faculty seeking or receiving accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that may impact their campus presence should contact Human Resources to explore campus presence arrangements that reasonably accommodate their disability.

3.9. This policy applies to full-time faculty. Campus presence and engagement will be reflected in the annual evaluation score as noted in [PS 10.A.05](#) for faculty and [PS 10.A.17](#) for department chairs.

3.10. Appointment letters shall always include the expectation that full-time faculty are required to teach a variety of modalities and have an in-person presence on campus, except for the cases where faculty are stipulated in their appointment letter to be teaching exclusively remotely.

#### **4. PROCEDURES**

4.1. There are no procedures associated with this PS.

#### **5. REVIEW PROCESS**

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Review Period: Every three years on or before the date the policy was last revised and/or approved

*Signed original on file.*

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President

#### **6. POLICY HISTORY**

Issue #1: 09/01/25 (this issue)

#### **7. REFERENCES**

[SAM 02.A.20](#)

[Texas Government Code, Section 658.002](#)

[Texas Government Code, Section 658.010](#)

[PS 02.A.02](#)

[PS 02.A.09](#)

[PS 10.A.05](#)

[PS 10.A.17](#)

[PS 02.A.11](#)

[PS 02.B.10](#)

## **8. EXHIBITS**

There are no exhibits associated with this PS.