

# **Southern Polytechnic State University**

## **NEW FACULTY “QUICK START” GUIDE**

Updated August 08

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August 11, 2008

Dear New Faculty Colleagues,

Welcome to Southern Polytechnic State University! We know you will enjoy working with our faculty and our students as well as pursue your professional career. SPSU is a great place and has exceptional people working here, and we’re glad that you’re joining our community.

This “Quick Start” Guide is meant to help you make the transition to working at SPSU. It provides some information about the University and our values, as well as information about how things work (pay, ID’s, parking, etc.) and our academic structure. It also includes a section on our expectations for faculty and how we evaluate faculty. Finally, to help you get started as a faculty member and as an advisor, there are sections offering some (hopefully helpful) advice in these areas. The material in this manual comes from a variety of offices on campus in an edited form. Thanks to all who contributed!

More detailed information about many of these topics is available on the University website  
**<http://www.spsu.edu>**

Don’t forget that your best source for information about the University, its students, how to be successful in the classroom, and how to become involved in research and service is often from senior colleagues in your department, your Department Chair or your Dean. And if you’re really desperate, you can even call me at 678-915-7206 (office) or 770-321-2236 (home) or email me at [zszafran@spsu.edu](mailto:zszafran@spsu.edu).

I know I speak for everyone at SPSU in welcoming you aboard, and offering you any help you may need.

Sincerely,

Zvi Szafran, VPAA

## **Section 1 General Information**

### 1.1 A Brief History of Southern Polytechnic State University

Founded in 1948 as a two-year division of Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), SPSU was established at the request of Georgia business and industry. It first opened its doors as the Technical Institute in Chamblee, Georgia, with 116 students, all but 10 being World War II veterans, and a staff of 12.

In 1949, SPSU became the Southern Technical Institute and was recognized as a college-level school by the U.S. Department of Education. Less than a decade later, the college moved to its present campus in Marietta, Georgia. In 1961, Hoyt McClure was named acting director and led the movement to build eight new buildings on 120 acres of land. Since then we have continued to expand -- our campus now encompasses more than 230 acres and contains 35 buildings.

SPSU became accredited as a four-year college in 1970, and was one of the first colleges in the nation to offer the bachelor of Engineering Technology degree. We also earned independence in the University System, separating ties with Georgia Tech. In the summer of 1980, SPSU officially became the 14th senior college and the 33rd independent unit of the University System of Georgia.

The college's first president, Dr. Stephen R. Cheshier of Purdue University, was named in 1980 and served with distinction until his retirement as president in June 1997. He saw SPSU through two name changes -- Southern College of Technology in 1987 and Southern Polytechnic State University in the summer of 1996, when the school also became a university. Dr. Daniel S. Papp served as interim president from July of 1997 to August of 1998, when the university welcomed Dr. Lisa A. Rossbacher, formerly of Dickinson College, as its president.

Many exciting changes have taken place in the recent past. A new mission statement was adopted in Fall, 2005, emphasizing that SPSU will be expanding its curriculum, both by adding programs in the area of engineering and by adding new majors in technologically-focused liberal arts areas, in order to become a more comprehensive university. Approval was obtained for SPSU to offer Construction Engineering, its first core engineering program, in Spring 2006. Various programs also underwent name changes, including Business Administration (formerly Management), English and Professional Communication (formerly International Technical Communication), and International Studies, which added new concentrations in History and Political Science. Mechatronics Engineering was added in Fall 2006, and Systems Engineering in Spring 2007. Our newest major, Chemistry, was approved in August 2007. An additional proposal for a Psychology major has been approved by the Board of Regents. Letters of Intent have been submitted for a BS in Political Science and an MS in Instructional Design, and will soon be submitted for a BA and MA in Accounting. For this Fall a Science Education concentration in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Math will be offered in conjunction with Kennesaw State University.

Last year SPSU purchased five additional acres of land near the center of campus, known as the Elks Lodge. This land will be the site of future construction. A new Facilities Master Plan has

been completed, emphasizing both new building construction and adaptive reuse of existing facilities. Phase One of the Plan was recommended for funding by the Board of Regents in August 2007: a \$38 million Engineering Technology Center which is now under construction.

### 1.2 Mission Statement (Approved Fall, 2005)

Southern Polytechnic State University is proud to be Georgia’s technology university. Our academic, professional, outreach, and service programs embrace all aspects of technology, including the practical applied skills (*techné*) needed to solve today’s real-world problems and the theoretical knowledge (*logos*) necessary to meet tomorrow’s challenges. SPSU graduates are well prepared to lead the scientific and economic development of an increasingly complex state, nation, and world.

Our mission is to serve both traditional and non-traditional students at the undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education levels in engineering and engineering technology, the sciences, applied liberal arts, business, and professional programs. We work to develop the broader community’s intellectual, cultural, economic, and human resources. Facilitated by our innovative faculty, dedicated staff, and supportive campus environment, our learning community empowers SPSU students with the ability and vision to transform the future.

### 1.3 Vision Statement

Southern Polytechnic State University is a comprehensive university with a unique purpose. Through a fusion of technology with the liberal arts and sciences, we create a learning community that encourages thoughtful inquiry, diverse perspectives, and strong preparation of our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly technological world.

The University – faculty, staff, students, and graduates – aspires to be the best in the world at finding creative, practical solutions to real-world problems and improving the quality of life for people around the globe.

### 1.4 Values

- The student comes first. The recruitment, education, and placement of our students are our highest priorities.
- Learning is the focus of everything we do. We provide an environment for the success of our students, including high academic standards, outstanding teaching quality, and excellent student services.
- Achieving an education is a responsibility shared by students, faculty, and staff. We all accept responsibility for excellence in fulfilling our respective roles.
- Continual improvement is essential to our future. We strive to improve the education that we provide to our students.
- We encourage academic freedom. We cherish an atmosphere of independent thought and open discussion.

- We work cooperatively and collaboratively. We value the contributions of all members of the Southern Polytechnic team and treat each other with courtesy and respect.
- Honesty, integrity and mutual respect form our foundation. Our actions are characterized by social and personal responsibility, and we act in ways which command the respect of all who deal with us.
- Our partners are essential to our excellence. We maintain open and honest lines of communication and collaboration with our many academic, industrial, and community partners.
- We are citizens of the world. We strive to instill environmental, cultural and international awareness throughout our college community.

1.5 Do It Anyway

**The Paradoxical Commandments**

by Dr. Kent M. Keith

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

© Copyright Kent M. Keith 1968, renewed 2001

1.6 What is a Student?

A **STUDENT** is the most important person in any educational institution.

A **STUDENT** is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him/her.

A **STUDENT** is not an interruption of our work. He/she is the purpose of it.

A **STUDENT** does us a favor when he/she enrolls. We are not doing him/her a favor by serving him/her.

A **STUDENT** is a part of our work--not an outsider.

A **STUDENT** is not just a statistic. He/she is a flesh and blood human being with feelings and emotions like us.

A **STUDENT** is a person who comes to us with his/her needs or wants. It is our job to fill them.

A **STUDENT** is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give him/her.

A **STUDENT** is the life blood of this and every other educational institution.

*(author unknown, taken from “Example University Academic Advising Handbook,  
[http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingIssues/Example\\_Univ\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingIssues/Example_Univ_Handbook.pdf))*

## **Section Two New Employee Information**

### 2.1 The Academic Affairs Office

#### **The Office**

The Academic Affairs Office is located in **Building B, Room 107**. The office is open M-F from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM, although in practice, the office is often open until about 6 PM.

**Ms. Debbie Patrick** is the Academic Affairs secretary. Her phone number is 678-915-7238, and her email is dpatrick@spsu.edu.

#### **The VPAA**

**Dr. Zvi Szafran** (Ph.D. in Chemistry, University of South Carolina) has been the Academic Vice President since July 1, 2005. His phone numbers are 678-915-7206 (office) and 770-321-2236 (home). His email is zszafran@spsu.edu.

#### **The Associate VPAA**

**Mr. David Caudill** is the Acting Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. His office is in Building J-172, his phone number is 678-915-3168, and his email is dcaudill@spsu.edu.

#### **The Assistant to the VPAA**

**Mr. Stephen Hamrick** is the Assistant to the VPAA and the Registrar. His office is in B-130, and his phone numbers are 678-915-7239 (office) and 770 427-7006 home, and his email is shamrick@spsu.edu.

#### **Functions of the Academic Affairs Office**

The VPAA is responsible for coordinating the educational programs of the university, for supervising the academic activities of the university, and for enhancing the quality of instruction and learning at the university. The VPAA oversees the academic affairs budget, and in consultation with the deans and department chairs, is responsible for developing and establishing the school and departmental budgets. The VPAA is a non-voting member of all standing committees handling academic matters, and may appoint advisory committees as the need arises. The VPAA plays a key role in all reappointment, pre-tenure, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure reviews; both ensuring that requirements have been met and that the processes are conducted in a fair, consistent and impartial manner.

The Academic Affairs Office maintains faculty files, issues faculty contracts, makes all full-time academic offers of employment, and works with school and departmental offices to ensure the smooth and timely operation of the educational program at the university.

## 2.2 The Paperwork

### **The Hiring Process**

When a position becomes available, it is advertised in the Chronicle of Higher Education (full-time academic positions), in journals appropriate to the position, and/or in the local media. A search committee reviews applications, and makes recommendations to the department chair, dean and VPAA. Full-time position offers are conveyed by the VPAA to the candidate and are contingent upon a successful background clearance. If the candidate accepts the offer, a formal contract letter is issued by the Academic Affairs office. Signing this letter indicates acceptance of the position. Part-time positions are generally advertised in local and regional media and on the University website. Candidates are reviewed by the department chair. Background checks are required for all new faculty and are handled through Crystal McClure in the Human Resources Office (678-915-3131 or cmclure@spsu.edu). The new faculty member should complete release forms and submit them to Human Resources. The hiring department should submit the faculty member’s vita and a Faculty Information Data Form (FID) to Debbie Patrick in the VPAA’s office. This is required as part of the background check process.

### **Initial Contracts and EIF’s**

When a full-time contract letter has been signed, and for all part-time hires, an **Employee Information Form** (EIF) is filled out by the hiring departmental office and approved by the appropriate school dean and the VPAA. The form indicates the name of the new hire, the purpose and term for which they are being hired, and the salary. The VPAA’s office will forward the signed EIF form to the budget office, which in turn approves the issuing of paychecks. Official transcripts should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office via the departmental office.

### **Initial Paperwork**

All new faculty should report to Human Resources within three days of their start date and are required to fill out various forms provided by the Human Resources Office. The contact person at HR is Quint Hill (678-915-5557, qhill@spsu.edu). Forms include those related to employment, taxes, life insurance, health insurance, direct deposit (if desired) and retirement plan. Multiple options are available for health insurance and retirement plans. The HR office has materials describing the relative benefits of each plan.

### **Paychecks**

Full-time faculty are paid on a ten month basis (August-May) with checks being issued at the end of each month, except in December and May when checks are released at the end of the semester. Each paycheck consists, therefore, of 1/10 of your full-time salary, less taxes and deductions. Part-time faculty hired for the fall semester receive checks at the end of September, October, November and the end of the semester in December. Part-time Faculty hired for the spring semester receive checks at the end of January, February, March and April. All faculty teaching in the summer receive two checks, one at the end of June and the other at the end of July.

## 2.3 Basic Resources

### **Offices and Keys**

Full-time faculty are provided an office for their use. Some departments also have shared offices for part-time faculty, depending on space available. Faculty offices contain a desk, chairs, a filing cabinet, bookshelves, a telephone, and a computer/printer with access to the internet. Office supplies are available from your department office. If you have any additional office needs, please inform your department chair.

You will be given keys to your office and to the buildings that your office and classrooms are in. The department secretary or administrative assistant will initiate the necessary forms, although it is not a bad idea to remind them to do so.

### **Campus ID and Parking Permits**

To obtain a campus ID card, you should fill out an ID form (obtained from the Campus Police, located on the first floor of Norton Dormitory—Building V, open M-F, 8 AM – 6 PM). Bring a picture ID with you. You should get your parking permit at the same time at the same location.

You will be issued a parking sticker (which should go on lower driver-side rear window) or a hanging tag (which goes on your rear-view mirror). There is no charge for a parking sticker. Various lots are available around campus for faculty parking. Detailed information about parking policies can be found at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/police/site/parking.html>**

### **Telephone System and Telephone Directory**

Your department secretary will have arranged to have a telephone number assigned to you by filling out an Accounts Request Form, available online at

**<http://www.spsu.edu/infotech/facstaff/accountreq.htm>**

This form should be signed by your department chair and returned to the Information Technology Division office in H-243. Campus telephone numbers all have the format 678-915-xxxx. SPSU uses a VOIP (voice over internet protocol) system for all telephone calls. The ShoreTel Call Manager is a useful software application that provides easy access to many advanced features. The instructions for the ShoreTel system are available at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/infotech/help/phone/ShorelineBrochure.pdf>**

SPSU’s telephone directory is available online at:

**[http://www.spsu.edu/hr/dir\\_offices.html](http://www.spsu.edu/hr/dir_offices.html)**

### **Email/Network ID**

The same Accounts Request Form filled out for the phone number also gets you your email/network ID. Your initial account information and other login data will be given to your department secretary. For security reasons, please change your initial password immediately. Your SPSU email/network ID gives you access to the SPSU email system, classroom and laboratory computers, Hornet Connect, departmental web space, network storage, and many other services. Access to SPSU email is available from off campus at:

**<http://webmail.spsu.edu>**

Your Email/Network ID password, vacation/away messages, aliases, forwarding, and other features can be managed via the IT Accounts web tool, located at

**<http://accounts.spsu.edu>**

A directory of campus email addresses is available online at:

**<http://mercury.spsu.edu/helpdesk/spsumail.listing>**

### **IT Help**

If you have any questions about the status of your account request, please call Christine Jenkins at 678-915-7346. If you have technical problems, please call the IT helpdesk at 678-915-4357. The IT helpdesk hours are 8 am-10 pm M-Th, 8 am-5 pm F, 12 noon-4 pm Sa and 3pm-7 pm Su, with exceptions during semester breaks and university holidays. Work orders may also be entered online at **<http://helpdesk.spsu.edu>**

Your SPSU Email/Network ID is needed to log into the on-line helpdesk tool.

### **Wireless network**

Wireless internet access is available throughout the Library and the Student Center, H Building, Atrium of J, G building, the Architecture building, and is expanding to other locations on campus. The IT wireless network requires the use of an 802.1x protocol with EAS-TTLS Authentication (native to some computer systems and network cards). A software client to support wireless is available for SPSU faculty, staff, and students in the IT Workshop in H-242.

### **Food**

Southern Polytechnic State University contracts with a Carlyle's Catering to provide all food service for the campus. The cafeteria and grill are located in the Student Center. Lunch costs approximately \$6.25. Phone 678-915-7373 for further details.

Cafeteria Hours:	Breakfast:	7:30 am – 9:00 am
	Lunch:	11:30 am – 1:30 pm
	Dinner:	4:30 pm – 6:00 pm
Student Center Grill:	Daily from	7:30 am – 1:30 pm

### **Bookstore**

The campus Bookstore is located in the Student Center and operated by Barnes and Noble. It stocks textbooks, reference books and other supplies needed for academic work. In addition, the Bookstore sells clothes, snacks, magazines, health and beauty aids, greeting cards, etc. Phone 678-915-7355 for further details. A 10% discount is given to SPSU faculty and staff on non-sale items.

Bookstore Hours:	Monday - Thursday:	8:30 am – 6:00pm
	Friday:	8:30 am – 3:00 pm

### **Post Office**

The Student Center contains a full-service branch office of the U.S. Postal Service. Phone: 678-915-7353.

Post Office Hours:	Monday – Friday:	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
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## 2.4 The Lawrence V. Johnson Library

General information about the library may be found online at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/library/library.html>**.

Joyce Mills is the library director.

### **Identification**

In order to check out books, a photo ID card must be presented at the library circulation desk. An SPSU ID card is preferred, but any valid photo ID, such as a driver’s license, is acceptable.

### **Circulation Services**

Regularly circulating materials borrowed by faculty are due at the end of the current semester, at which time they must be returned or renewed. You may renew your materials in person (by bringing your ID card to the circulation desk—you don’t need to bring the books), or you may renew online at:

**<http://gil.spsu.edu>**

Click “Your Account Information.” Enter your library barcode and last name and click the “Login” button. Check the boxes next to any items you wish to renew and click “Renew.” Wait to be sure that your renewal request is confirmed. Bound periodicals and reference books may be borrowed for brief periods of time with permission from the library. Current periodicals do not circulate and the library does not offer free photocopying for faculty. To obtain a photocopier card, your Dean or Department Chair should submit a Departmental Request form to the library for the value he/she wishes to have placed on the card.

Faculty members are not charged overdue fines on regularly circulating materials. They are responsible for overdue charges on Reserve materials and for replacement costs and processing charges for lost or damaged materials.

### **Reserve Materials**

Library materials and personal items provided by faculty may be placed on Reserve. Reserve Request Forms are available at the Circulation Desk. Only required readings should be placed on reserve. Faculty may also make their reserve materials available in electronic format.

### **GIL Express**

Faculty can obtain printed books (not journal articles) from the collections of **all** University System of Georgia libraries through GIL Express. This can be done online at:

**<http://giluc.usg.edu>**

The books may then be picked up at the Circulation Desk of Johnson Library, or you may designate another University System library as a pick-up location.

### **Reference Services**

Assistance is available in person at the Reference Desk, by telephoning the Reference Office at (678) 915-7471, or by e-mailing the Reference Desk ([reference@spsu.edu](mailto:reference@spsu.edu)).

### **Library Instruction**

Librarians work with classes to teach research strategies to make students more effective users of information.

- An hour of instruction on the fundamentals of research.
- Advanced research strategies and presentations for specific research questions.
- Librarians can help devise effective research assignments for research methods courses.

To schedule a class session, please contact us at x7471 or e-mail Steven Vincent (svincen1@spsu.edu) at least one week in advance.

Many bibliographies of resources available in Library and on the Internet are available. Many are available online at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/library/bibs/index.htm>**

### **Electronic Services--GALILEO**

GALILEO is a University System initiative to improve access to information, including:

- a common catalog resource, the GIL Universal Catalog;
- access to more than 200 databases which index and abstract articles from popular magazines, scholarly journals, and newspapers
- access to state government publications and census data
- access to images and collections of materials relating to the history of Georgia.

Information may be found at:

**[http://www.spsu.edu/library/Departments/Reference/galileo\\_help.html](http://www.spsu.edu/library/Departments/Reference/galileo_help.html)**

GALILEO may be accessed at:

**<http://www.galileo.usg.edu>**

A password is required, which may be obtained at

**<http://gil.spsu.edu>**

Click "Get GALILEO Password," and enter with your library barcode and last name.

### **Acquisitions**

Each academic program is also given a small annual allocation for books. Requests for purchase of materials for the library should be submitted to your department's Library Committee representative.

## 2.5 Academic Calendar

The basic academic calendar is given below. A more detailed calendar may be found at:  
<http://www.spsu.edu/registrar/calendarpointer.html>

### Fall 2008

Aug 11-15	Monday-Friday	Fall Kick-Off Week
Aug 14-15	Thursday-Friday	New Student Orientation
Aug 18	Monday	Classes Begin
Sep 1	Monday	Labor Day Holiday
Nov 26 - 30	Wed. – Sun.	Thanksgiving Holiday for Students
Dec 4	Thursday	Last Day of Classes
Dec 6-10	Friday – Wed.	Final Exams
Dec 13	Saturday	Commencement

### Spring 2009

Jan 8	Thursday	New Student Orientation
Jan 12	Monday	First Day of Classes
Jan 19	Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Mar 8 - 14	Monday - Sunday	Spring Break
April 30	Thursday	Last Day of Classes for Spring
May 1 - 6	Friday – Wed.	Final Exams
May 9	Saturday	Commencement

### Summer 2009

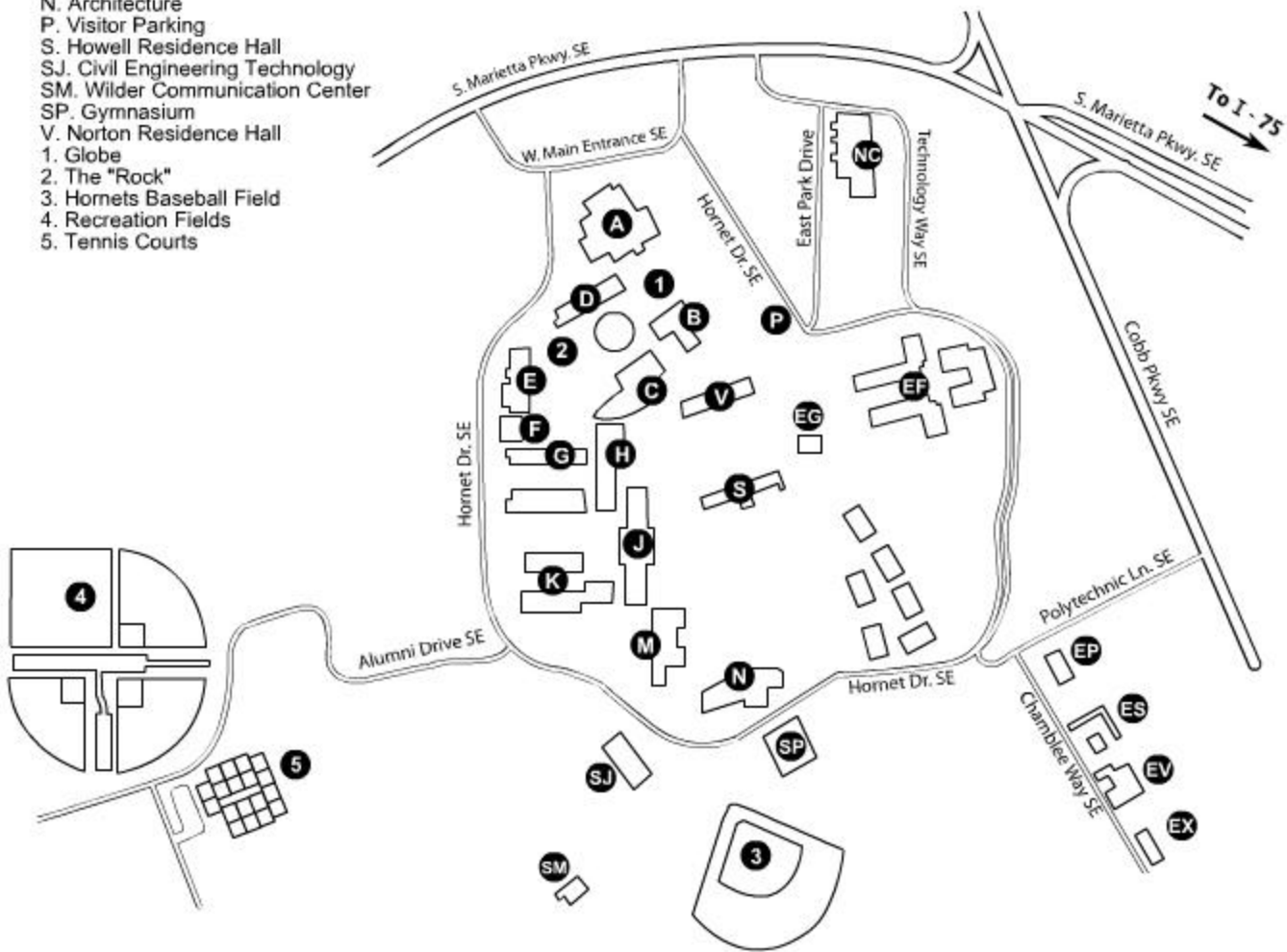
May 8	Friday	New Student Orientation
May 18	Monday	First Day of Classes
May 25	Monday	Memorial day Holiday
Jul 4	Saturday	Independence Day Holiday
Jul 23	Thursday	Last Day of Classes
Jul 24 – 29	Friday – Wed.	Finals
August 1	Saturday	Commencement

Additional calendar information, including detailed calendars for each term and future academic years, can be found on the web at: <http://www.spsu.edu/registrar/calendarpointer.html>.

# Southern Polytechnic

Georgia's Technology University

- A. Joe Mack Wilson Student Center
- B. Administration Building
- C. Lawrence V. Johnson Library
- D. Classroom Building D
- E. Crawford Laboratory Building
- EE. University Commons Apartments
- EF. Courtyard Apartments
- EG. Leasing Office & Community Center
- EP. Facilities Administration
- ES. Grounds & Vehicles Shop
- EV. Maintenance Shop
- EX. Central Receiving
- F. Continuing Education
- G. Electrical & Computer Engineering Technology
- H. Academic H
- J. Atrium Building J
- K. Clarence Arnston Mechanical Engineering Technology
- M. W. Clair Harris Textile Center
- NC. Recreation & Wellness Center
- N. Architecture
- P. Visitor Parking
- S. Howell Residence Hall
- SJ. Civil Engineering Technology
- SM. Wilder Communication Center
- SP. Gymnasium
- V. Norton Residence Hall
- 1. Globe
- 2. The "Rock"
- 3. Hornets Baseball Field
- 4. Recreation Fields
- 5. Tennis Courts



## **Section Three**

### **The Academic Structure at SPSU**

#### 3.1 General Information

Southern Polytechnic State University is one of 35 Universities and Colleges within the University System of Georgia. Since we are a special purpose university, all academic programs at SPSU are technology-focused. As a state university, we are also in the process of broadening our curricular offerings to encompass technology-focused liberal arts.

SPSU shares several core characteristics with the other colleges and universities of the University System of Georgia:

- A supportive campus climate to educate the whole person and meet and needs of students, faculty and staff
- Cultural ethnic, racial, and gender diversity in the faculty, staff, and student body
- Technology to advance educational purposes
- Collaborative relationships with other institutions, agencies and businesses to expand and enhance programs and services available to the citizens of Georgia.
- A commitment to excellence and responsiveness
- A commitment to a teaching/learning environment that sustains instructional excellence and promotes high levels of student achievement
- A high quality general education program
- A commitment to public service, continuing education, technical assistance, and economic development activities
- A commitment to scholarly and creative work

#### 3.2 Academic Structure

The academic departments at SPSU are divided into four schools:

School of Architecture, Construction and Civil Engineering (ACC)

- Department of Architecture (ARCH)
- Department of Construction Management (CNST)
- Department of Civil Engineering Technology (CET)

School of Arts and Sciences (A&S)

- Department of Biology, Chemistry and Physics (BCP)
- Department of English, Technical Communication and Media Arts (ECTMA)
- Department of Mathematics (MATH)
- Department of Social and International Studies (SIS)

School of Computing and Software Engineering (CSE)

- Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (CSWE)
- Department of Information Technology (IT)

School of Engineering Technology and Management (ETM)

- Department of Business Administration (BA)
- Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology (ECET)
- Department of Industrial Engineering Technology (IET)
- Department of Mechanical Engineering Technology (MET)

Each of the four Schools is headed by a Dean and each of the 13 Departments is headed by a Department Chair.

The SPSU Division of Engineering recently was established with an Associate Dean as the head and houses all of SPSU’s Engineering Programs.

In addition, there is also the Extended University, the Center for Continuing Education and the Southern Polytechnic Applied Research Center (SPARC). The Extended University is headed by a Dean who reports to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

3.3 Majors

SPSU offers a broad range of major programs. Plans are currently under development for broadening our curriculum in the areas of engineering and technology-focused liberal arts. The following degree programs are currently offered at SPSU:

**Associate of Science Degrees (1 offered)**

- Transfer program in General Studies

**Bachelors Degrees (30 offered)**

- Bachelor of Apparel and Textiles
- Bachelor of Applied Science
- Bachelor of Architecture
- Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science
- Bachelor of Arts in English and Professional Communication
- Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics
- Bachelor of Arts in Physics
- Bachelor of Science in Biology
- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Science in Chemistry
- Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Bachelor of Science in Construction Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Construction Management
- Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Information Technology

- Bachelor of Science in International Studies
- Bachelor of Science in Mathematics
- Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Mechatronics Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Psychology
- Bachelor of Science in Physics
- Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Surveying and Mapping
- Bachelor of Science in Technical Communication
- Bachelor of Science in Telecommunications Engineering Technology

### **Masters Degrees (9 offered)**

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Science in Computer Science
- Master of Science in Construction Management
- Master of Science in Engineering Technology (Electrical Concentration)
- Master of Science in Information Design and Communication
- Master of Science in Information Technology
- Master of Science in Quality Assurance
- Master of Science in Software Engineering
- Master of Science in Systems Engineering

### 3.4 Core Requirements

All major programs at SPSU (and in the University System of Georgia) require 60 credits worth of certain common elements, known as “the Core”. These are divided into six areas (Area A-F). Also, SPSU is an ECORE affiliate institution (ECORE is a USG consortium offering core courses online).

#### **Area A: Essential Skills (9-10 credits)**

This area encompasses Composition I and II (ENGL 1101 and 1102), and an introductory mathematics course, which depends on the student’s major:

- MATH 1111 for English and Professional Communication; International Studies; and Technical Communication majors
- MATH 2253 for all Engineering majors
- MATH 1113 for all other majors.

#### **Area B: Institutional Option (4 credits)**

This area emphasizes essential skills uniquely appropriate to each University. At SPSU, we require the following two courses:

- SPCH 2400—Public Speaking
- STS 2400—Science, Technology and Society

**Area C: Humanities and Fine Arts (6 credits)**

Students are required to take two courses in this area:

- An introductory course in literature (American, British, Western or World literature)
- An introductory course in fine arts or languages (Art, Drama, Music, Language).  
Language courses must be at the 1002 level.

**Area D: Science, Mathematics and Technology (11-12 credits)**

Students are required to take two laboratory science courses and an additional mathematics course (which depends on the student’s major):

- Two introductory laboratory science courses in Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics (students may also transfer appropriate lab courses in other disciplines)
- MATH 1113 for English and Professional Communication; International Studies; and Technical Communication majors
- MATH 2254 for Construction Engineering majors
- MATH 2253 for all other majors.

**Area E: Social Sciences (12 credits)**

Students are required to take four courses in the social sciences, in the following categories:

- One course in American History (HIST 2111 or 2112) or American Government (POLS 1101).
- One course in World History (HIST 1011 or 1013)
- An introductory course in a social science (Economics, Psychology or Sociology)
- An introductory course in global issues and world cultures (Anthropology (ANTH 1102), Ethnic Studies (ES 1100), Human Geography (GEOG 1101), Religion (RELG 1200), or Global Issues (POLS 2401)).

**Area F: Introductory Courses Related to the Major (16-18 credits)**

Students are required to take up to 18 credits of introductory courses in the major field or its cognates (usually mathematics, technical writing and science). The courses required in Area F differ from major to major, and are listed in the Catalog.

3.5 Major Requirements

In order to graduate, students are required to take 120 or more credits. Some programs (Engineering, Engineering Technology, and Construction Management) require 128, and Architecture, which is a five-year program, requires 150. As stated in section 3.4, all programs require 60 credits of core courses. The great majority of the remaining credits required for graduation are major requirements.

Major requirements vary from program to program, but have certain features in common:

- Most are upper division courses, numbered 3000 or higher. All majors must require at least 39 credits of such courses.
- Most require one or more lower division courses as prerequisites.
- Many programs have a capstone course, often consisting of a senior seminar or senior project.
- Many programs offer choices of concentrations or tracks to allow students to specialize in a particular subfield of the discipline.

## **Section Four**

### **Faculty Expectations and Evaluation**

Faculty categories are: Full-Time Tenure Track Faculty, Full-Time Lecturers, Full-Time Temporary Faculty, and Part-Time Temporary Faculty (Adjuncts.)

#### 4.1 Faculty Expectations

##### **Teaching (all faculty)**

Effective teaching is the primary expectation for all faculty. The following are some of the major expectations related to teaching:

- Being able to teach effectively under the conditions existing at the University
- Teaching classes related to faculty area of contract
- Being well prepared and organized
- Making continual efforts to improve teaching
- Preparing syllabi that (at a minimum) include office hours, email address, telephone number, course objectives and expected course outcomes, grading policy, and penalties (if any) for absences and late assignments
- Using a variety of fair, clear and objective grading methods
- Providing feedback on class assignments articulating strengths and weaknesses
- Returning graded assignments in a timely manner

##### **Advising (all full-time faculty)**

Faculty are expected to be effective advisors. Basic expectations in this area include:

- Cooperating with administrative endeavors in the interests of student retention
- Advising students on career development and advancement

##### **Service (all full-time faculty)**

Full-time faculty are expected to engage in service to the university and the academic community. This is generally accomplished by:

- Serving on program, school, and university-wide committees
- Preparing and submitting reports as needed and required
- Maintaining a professional and cooperative attitude with students, faculty, and administrators

##### **Professional Activity and Scholarship**

All full-time faculty are expected to be professionally active and all tenure-track faculty are expected to engage in scholarly activities. These activities include:

- Maintaining currency in the teaching discipline (workshops, short courses, professional meetings, etc.)
- Consulting
- Participating in professional organizations and activities within the discipline
- Professional development that enhance capabilities as a professional and teacher
- Developing new pedagogical materials, certificates, and/or degree proposals
- Engaging in scholarship (research, publications, professional presentations, etc.)
- Demonstrating academic achievement

#### 4.2 Faculty Availability (all full-time faculty)

While there are no specific requirements for required number of hours on campus, faculty should be available sufficiently to carry out their required duties in a timely manner. For full-time faculty, these include:

- Meeting classes on time and for the duration scheduled
- Meeting with students outside of class on a reasonable basis to provide additional help
- Scheduling at least 5 office hours a week during reasonable hours for students, and being available to assist students during those hours.
- Meeting students being supervised in research/projects/independent study/internships on a regular basis
- Meeting advisees on a regular basis
- Being readily available for departmental, school and campus meetings
- Attending program, school, and general faculty meetings
- Participating in campus activities on a reasonable basis.

Part-time (adjunct) faculty have the following expectations:

- Meeting classes on time and for the duration scheduled
- Meeting with students before and after of class on a reasonable basis to provide additional help
- Being available for major departmental meetings

#### 4.3 How Faculty are Evaluated (Full-Time Tenure-Track and Full-Time Lecturers)

All faculty members’ performance is periodically evaluated on the basis of evidence provided by the faculty member, as well as by evidence from departmental colleagues, students, administrators, and in some cases, outside evaluators. Every faculty member should ensure that all positive evidence has been included and presented as part of the evaluation process. It is very important to keep records of accomplishments in all areas of faculty expectation.

Full-time faculty are evaluated in a number of ways at SPSU. The procedures are described in Policy and Procedure Documents, known as P&P’s. These can be found on the University website at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/pandp/index.html>**

The general policy document on faculty evaluation is P&P 803.07. The following are the major types of evaluation for new faculty:

- Courses are evaluated by students (see P&P 803.0701)
- Faculty are required to submit an annual **activities report** to the department chair, summarizing courses taught, professional activities, scholarship, and service (see P&P 803.075).
- Untenured faculty undergo annual Reappointment Review (see P&P 803.0)

Further on, there are other types of evaluation:

- Untenured faculty undergo pre-tenure review during their third year of full-time service (see P&P 803.0904)
- Untenured tenure-track faculty undergo tenure review during their fifth or sixth year of full-time service (see P&P 803.09)
- Tenured faculty undergo post-tenure review every 5 years following tenure, their last promotional review, or their last post-tenure review (see P&P 803.0905).
- Faculty undergo promotional review in order to change ranks (see P&P 803.09).

Understanding these documents and their nuances can be complex. It is generally a good idea to discuss your progress with your department chair, with senior departmental colleagues, with your dean, or with the VPAA, all of whom can help clarify expectations and provide you with some perspective relative to how evaluations have been carried out in the past.

Section 4.4 AAUP 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 of intellectual guides and counselors. Professors make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure 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.

V. As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

*American Association of University Professors Policy Documents & Reports, Pages 75-76, 1990 (Endorsed by the Seventy-Third Annual Meeting, June 1987)*

## Section 5 Getting Started In The Classroom

### 5.1 Effective Teaching

While there is no one correct or required way to teach, the University expects whatever method(s) you use to be effective in helping students learn the necessary material, and achieve success in passing your courses. Many faculty use lecture as the primary means of conveying material in the classroom. Others use group work, discussions, debate, the Socratic method, individualized assignments and many other methods. The best methods will depend on the material you are teaching and your particular teaching style and personality. Deciding how to teach a course is not a simple matter—you may wish to discuss this with faculty colleagues.

The stereotypical course, with the faculty member lecturing and the students taking notes, with a mid-term and a final, is **not** a particularly effective way to teach. While there are many ways that one could teach a class, research shows that all effective methods have certain things in common. Some basic principles are:

- Methods that actively engage students are more effective than passive methods. Lecture is a passive method. Lecture with discussion is more active. Lecture with embedded activities is more active still. Students learn best when active methods are used.
- Encourage students to ask questions. Often.
- Learning assessment works best when it occurs early and often. Homework, quizzes, tests, short papers, term-papers, lab reports, presentations, and question and answer sessions are all ways of determining whether students have learned the material. You should select those methods that fit the material and your teaching style best.
- One week is the maximum reasonable length of time to grade and return an assignment.
- Since students learn in multiple ways, you should use a variety of ways of teaching and assessment. Single modes of teaching and assessment are less effective.
- Getting to know your students in a personal way leads to better results. Letting your students know that you genuinely care about their success leads to better results.
- Helping students identify the important material leads to better results. You can do this by distributing outlines of key materials, through giving quizzes, assigning homework, giving practice exams, etc.

### **Syllabus**

Faculty are required to prepare a syllabus for each course that (at a minimum) includes course objectives and expected course outcomes, grading policy, and penalties (if any) for absences and late assignments. You should also include your office hours, email address, and telephone number. Learning expectations are clearly spelled out in your course syllabus. Let your students know that you have high expectations of them, and are willing to work with them to meet those expectations.

Be sure that the method by which grades will be determined is clearly spelled out in the course syllabus. Nothing leads to more complaints and unease than when a student doesn't know how they are doing or how they will be graded in a course.

## **Office Hours**

Full-time faculty are required to hold a minimum of five regular, posted, office hours per week, though some do more. Many faculty will also give students their email address for questions occurring outside of office hours. Many faculty will also make specific appointments with students. Students should be constantly encouraged to come to see you if they are having any difficulties. It is appropriate for you to ask students who you know are having difficulty to come see you, even on a regular basis. Part-time faculty are expected to be reasonably available to their students immediately before and after class, and by email.

## 5.2 Technology in the Classroom

### **Classroom Technology**

Many classrooms at SPSU are equipped with computers, projectors, smartboards, document cameras, and other technology. Workshops are held on a regular basis in the Academic Support Center on the use of technology in the classroom.

You should inspect your classroom before the semester begins to determine if you will need assistance with the technology, or if you will need a room with different resources. For any questions about how to use the equipment, contact the IT Helpdesk at 678-915-4357 (HELP). Technical problems with a classroom should be reported immediately to the same number. Rooms should be locked after use, and any missing equipment or suspicious activity should be reported to University Police (678-915-5555) as soon as possible. Mini-DV camcorders, digital cameras, tripods, a PA system, wireless microphones, laptops, projectors, and other equipment is available are available for checkout in room H-202. Please call the IT Helpdesk in order to reserve equipment or determine availability of equipment. A list of equipment available can be found at:

**<http://www.spsu.edu/infotech/equipment.html>**

### **Campus Wide Software**

Many software applications are available for installation across campus. A list of available software available can be found at: <http://www.spsu.edu/infotech/software.html>. If you have any suggestions for additional software that would benefit from a site-license, please contact David Stone ([dstone@spsu.edu](mailto:dstone@spsu.edu)).

### **VISTA**

VISTA is the USG learning management system for online learning. It provides tools for course management, communication, and collaboration. Vista can be used to create online courses, or to publish materials that supplement existing courses. You do not have to be teaching a course online to use Vista—in fact, most people use it to supplement regular “face-to-face” classes. Only a minimal technical expertise required from the instructor. Vista is entirely web-based, and campus computers should already be configured with the proper version of JAVA for Vista. SPSU is currently using Ver.3 and will be changing to Ver.8 in Fall of 2009. Basic information about logging into Vista may be found at:

**[http://www.spsu.edu/webct/vista\\_login\\_instructions.html](http://www.spsu.edu/webct/vista_login_instructions.html)**

The Academic Support Center provides training and consultation on VISTA and other online tools.

### 5.3 Grading

#### Grades

The following letter grades are used to specify the level of performance in undergraduate academic courses:

A	Excellent	4 quality points
B	Good	3 quality points
C	Satisfactory	2 quality points
D	Passing	1 quality point
F	Failure	0 quality points
WF	Withdrawal after deadline	0 quality points

Graduate courses use the same letter grades, except that “D” is not used. Other grades used but not included in the calculation of grade point averages are:

I	Incomplete	Indicates satisfactory coursework that was not completed for nonacademic reasons beyond the student’s control. An incomplete must be removed during the next term in which the student attends classes, or the Registrar’s Office will convert the “I” into an “F”.
IP	In Progress	Indicates credit has not been given in courses that require a continuation of work beyond the term for which the student signed up for the course. For approved graduate thesis and project courses only.
V	Audit	Indicates the course has been audited. No credit is given. May not be used in the future as a basis for course credit.
W	Withdrawal	Assigned when a student officially withdraws from a course before the midpoint of the term. Not counted in the GPA.
S	Satisfactory	Indicates credit has been given for completion of degree requirements other than academic course work.
U	Unsatisfactory	Indicates unsatisfactory performance in completing degree requirements other than academic course work.

#### Grades in Courses with Labs

For subjects including both class and laboratory work, each portion is considered essential and the grades on each will be combined at the end of the semester and reported as one. Failure in either class or lab may result in failure of the entire course.

#### Reporting Grades

Faculty are required to report their grades at the following times:

- **Early warning grades** are due for all undergraduate courses at the end of the second or third week of classes. They consist of filling in an online form indicating whether the student is “engaged”, “not engaged” or “not present”. The form should be submitted even if all students are “engaged”.

Students who are not performing up to expected standards should be encouraged to enroll in SPSU 101. SPSU 101 is a one credit-hour course that teaches study skills such as self-

advocacy and orientation to academic life at SPSU. Students are not charged tuition for SPSU 101. This is the reason early warnings are submitted.

Effective Fall 08, SPSU has a Tutoring Center located in the basement of Howell Hall. Tutoring is available in Math, Composition, and Physics. For more information on the Tutoring Center, call Jeff Orr.

- **Mid-term grades** are due at the end of the seventh week of classes. Mid-term grades are either "P" (Pass) or "F" (Fail).
- **Final grades** are due 72 hours after the scheduled final exam for the course. Final grades for graduating seniors are due at noon on the day following the last day of finals.

## **BANNER**

SPSU uses BANNER as the grade entry system. Your academic department will provide information about how to enter grades on a timely basis. Faculty can use BANNER to review student records (on a need to know basis), for classroom scheduling, and to generate lists of students enrolled in a course. Students can use BANNER to check their grades, register for classes, pay tuition, and view their academic transcripts.

### 5.4 Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom

All faculty members have the right to remove any student from their classrooms if the student's behavior is of a disruptive nature. Giving the student a warning is generally an appropriate first step. If the disruptive behavior persists, ask the student to leave the classroom. Inform your department chair of what has occurred at the soonest opportunity. If the disruptive behavior is dangerous, or if you are threatened, you should report it to the University Police (678-915-5555).

### 5.5 Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty is an act or acts on the part of or in behalf of any student, which does or could improperly distort students' grades or other student academic records. Some relevant rules include:

1. No student shall give or receive unauthorized assistance in preparing laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, or similar requirements; or in taking a quiz or examination.
2. No student shall take or attempt to procure in an unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class, including tests, grade change forms, grade rolls, laboratory equipment, computer disks or printouts, etc.
3. No student shall submit any material that was created or published by another person without giving appropriate credit. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas of another are incorporated into a paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged.
4. No student shall submit false claims of credit for work.
5. No student shall falsify a written or verbal statement of fact to obtain unearned academic credit. No student shall fabricate facts, evidence, or research.
6. No student shall forge, alter, or misuse any University documents

If you believe that an act of academic dishonesty has taken place, you should discuss the circumstance with the student(s) before taking final action. If student cannot be reached before grades are due, the grade of "Incomplete" should be used until he or she can be reached. Normal sanctions for academic dishonesty include receiving a grade of "0" on the assessment in question (a mild sanction), lowering of the course grade (a moderate sanction), failure of the course (a strong sanction), or suspension/expulsion from the university (generally done in the case of a second offense). All cases of academic dishonesty should be reported immediately to the department chair and to the Registrar, for inclusion in the student's file.

The student has the right of appeal of the faculty member's sanction, first to the faculty member's Department Chair, then to the appropriate school dean, and, if necessary, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

A grade of "F" issued for reasons of academic dishonesty can not be superseded by a voluntary withdrawal, and will be included in the student's cumulative grade point average calculated for graduation purposes, regardless if the course is repeated.

### **turnitin.com**

Plagiarism detection is available to SPSU faculty through a service called **turnitin**. This is an online service, so no software is required. After a document is submitted, an originality report will be generated by Turnitin that details the quantity of plagiarism, with links to documents found online or in a local database that contain similar passages. This service can also check for originality of equations and programs. If you plan on using this service in your course, the Board of Regents Office of Legal Affairs recommends that students be notified prior to registration. The simplest way to do this is to add "plagiarism prevention used" to the Attribute Option of your BANNER course listing. The ASC provides training sessions.

### 5.6 Withdrawals

Students wanting to withdraw from one or more classes before the midpoint of the term may do so by:

- Completing a Request to Withdraw at the Registrar's Office
- Withdrawing through the Web-based registration system OR
- By sending a signed fax or letter to the registrar's office

The student will then be assigned a grade of "W" for those course(s). While a grade of "W" does not count in the student's cumulative grade point average, it does count in attempted hours for financial aid purposes and could affect a student's eligibility for aid if there are repeated withdrawals.

### **Withdrawing After the Mid-Point**

Students who withdraw after the midpoint of the term are not eligible for a grade of "W" except in cases of hardship or extenuating circumstances as approved by the faculty. Students withdrawing after the withdrawal deadline date without faculty approval receive a grade of "WF" for the course(s), which counts the same as an "F" for grade point purposes.

**Withdrawals After the Deadline**

A request for a grade of "W" after the mid-point should be made on a Petition to Withdraw After the Deadline form, available in the Registrar's Office. The petition must be completed and signed by the student's instructor(s). The petition must be accompanied by documentation sufficient to support the extenuating circumstances claimed.

No student will be allowed to withdraw from a course after the final class day of the term except via the petition process.

## **Section Six Getting Started with Advising**

“DON’T HESITATE TO GIVE ADVICE. IT PASSES THE TIME AND NOBODY LISTENS TO IT ANYWAY”

### 6.1 What is Advising?

As a faculty member, you are called upon to be an effective advisor. Many faculty believe that advising begins and ends by helping a student select courses for the next semester. Not so—the advising process actually encompasses several key areas<sup>1</sup>:

1. Exploration of the Student’s Life Goals
2. Exploration of the Student’s Career Goals
3. Exploration of the Student’s Educational Goals
4. Selection of an appropriate Educational Program
5. Selection of Courses
6. Scheduling of Classes

An effective advisor is a mentor, a life coach, an interested friend and a confidant; and plays a crucial role in the University’s ability to offer each student a personalized education that fits with the student’s goals and hopes. Quality advising provides several key benefits to students<sup>2</sup>:

1. They will know at least one member of the faculty outside the classroom.
2. They will have an opportunity to discuss occupation and professional specialties with a faculty member who is interested in their future.
3. They will have a “lifeline” to the administration and its policies.
4. They will have a role model for their future careers.

## 6.2 Strategies of Advisement

The following are some basic strategies for effective advising<sup>3</sup>.

- A. Get to know your advisee in as many ways as possible, including outside the office and not only during class scheduling or unusual circumstances. Try to get to know the academic abilities and background of your advisee.
- B. Explore your advisee’s objectives, interests, and motivations. Your advisee’s certainty about future objectives and goals is often shaky. When you have some knowledge of your advisee’s non-academic background (home influences, hobbies, friends) a more thorough type of advisement is possible.
- C. Develop a rapport with your advisees. If the student knows you as a professional person who has a genuine interest in students, the advisement process will become much more beneficial for both of you. Encourage your advisee to meet other faculty members in the department—multiple contacts can be useful to a student who is trying to assess personal goals.
- D. Become knowledgeable about University policies and procedures regarding academic programs. You should review prior policies (especially new policy changes) before beginning each registration period.
- E. Encourage student involvement in campus activities—it is often the key to retention in school.
- F. You should enhance a advisee’s motivation by stressing good academic planning. Lack of motivation is the most common cause of poor academic performance. While there is no “magic bullet” to help a student become motivated, some strategies might include:
  - 1. Matching courses early in the program to the advisee’s academic strengths, interests, and background.
  - 2. Helping the student, when possible, have a chance to build on success rather than failure.
  - 3. Challenging capable students to continue their efforts toward academic excellence.
  - 4. Explaining the rewards of a strong academic program and associated good grades.
- G. An advisor cannot make decisions for an advisee, but can be a sympathetic listener and offer alternatives for the advisee's consideration. Advisors cannot increase the ability of a student, but can encourage the maximum use of that ability.
- H. Advisors should not try to personally handle complex problems concerning financial aid, mental or physical health, personal or social counseling. When these situations do arise, the faculty advisor should refer students to professional personnel who are specially trained and knowledgeable about dealing with such problems.

6.3 13 Do's and 20 Don'ts for Good Advisement<sup>4</sup>

**Do:**

1. Do appreciate the emotion behind your advisee's words. Recognize para-linguistic behavior (body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, emphases and pauses). This will enable you to respond to her total message and not just words.
2. Do try to recognize if your advisee's emotions, and if they conflict with the words he uses. This will enable you to respond accurately.
3. Do constantly check your understanding of what you hear her say. (Do not hear what you want to hear.)
4. Do let your advisee tell his story first. (Do not interrupt your advisee's sentences.)
5. Do check to see if she wants to respond to what you have previously said.
6. Do relax. (Don't give the impression you want to jump right in and talk.)
7. Do establish good eye contact. Use affirmative nods and facial expressions.
8. Do respond to your advisee with "yes", "I see", etc.
9. Do ask clarifying or continuing questions.
10. Do offer reflections on what he is feeling, based on your observations, such as "I sense you are tense about this".
11. Do offer a bit of self-disclosure to support her experience, such as "I remember how nervous I was the first time I went in to see an advisor."
12. Do try to help him focus on a particular issue: "We're talking about a lot of things, which is most important to work on now?"
13. Do ask questions requiring more than a "yes," "no," or "I don't know" answer.

**Don't**

1. Don't do all the talking. You can't listen while you are talking.
2. Don't ignore her feelings. Try to put yourself in her place.
3. Don't be afraid to ask questions. When you don't understand, ask.
4. Don't give up too soon. Give her enough time to say what she has to say.
5. Don't let your mind wander. Actively focus your attention on his words and ideas.
6. Don't avoid looking at your advisee. Her face, mouth, eyes, hands, will all help her to communicate with you. Make her feel that you are listening.
7. Don't get angry at what he is saying, and this misunderstand his words or meaning.
8. Don't miss the main points. Concentrate on the main ideas and not the illustrative material. Examine them only to see if they support and define the main ideas.
9. Don't let your reactions to her influence your interpretation of what she says.
10. Don't hog the responsibility for the conversation.
11. Don't argue mentally—this sets up a barrier between you and the speaker.
12. Don't forget you can listen faster than he can talk. Use this rate difference to think back over what he has said, evaluate his development, etc. Speech rate is 100-150 words per minute; think rate is 250-500 wpm.
13. Don't forget to listen to what isn't said. Sometimes you can learn just as much by determining what the other person leaves out or avoids as what she says.
14. Don't forget to listen to how something is said. We frequently concentrate so hard on what is said that we miss the importance of the emotional reactions and attitudes.
15. Don't antagonize your advisee. You may cause her to conceal her ideas, emotions, and attitudes. Try to be aware of the effect you are having on her.

16. Don't forget to listen for his personality. As he talks, you can begin to find out his likes and dislikes, his motivations, his value system—what makes him tick.
17. Don't jump to conclusions. Don't assume that she uses words in the same way you do; that she didn't say what she meant; that she is avoiding looking you in the eyes because she is telling a lie; that she is lying because she has interpreted the facts differently from you; that she is angry because she is enthusiastic in presenting her views. Assumptions like these may turn out to be true, but more often they just get in the way of your understanding.
18. Don't overly rely on classifying the speaker, and then try to fit everything he says into what makes sense coming from that type of person. People have the trait of being unpredictable and not fitting into their classifications.
19. Don't make hasty judgments. Wait until all the facts are in.
20. Don't fail to recognize your own prejudices. Try to be aware of your own feelings toward the student, the subject, etc. and allow for these prejudgments.

#### 6.4 Four Bad Models of Advisement<sup>2</sup>

##### **The Vending Machine Advisor**

*Slip a coin in and get a schedule out. The student and Vending Machine Advisor interact mechanically to work out a schedule for the next semester, and thus, the major task of advising has been fulfilled!* Students deserve much more assistance: analysis of their achievements and failures, help in exploring potential occupations, referral to remedial and developmental services, developing suitable work/study/recreation schedules, referral to health services, and discussion of appropriate graduate/professional programs.

##### **The 1000 Mile Checkup Advisor**

*The 1000 Mile Checkup Advisor is active in arranging a schedule of courses, and then checking a month or six weeks later to see how the program has worked out. Better than the Vending Machine, but not by much.*

##### **The Ambulance Advisor**

*The Ambulance Advisor leaps into action at moments of crisis. The student fails miserably, is trapped in a violation of academic or social regulations, is about to drop or be dropped, with the result that the Ambulance Advisor races to the scene with sirens wailing. Too little and too late is usually the appraisal of this well-intentioned but ill-planned maneuver.*

##### **The Mother Hen Advisor**

*The Mother Hen Advisor has the wingspread of an eagle, hovering over the student day and by night—protecting and preventing. Probably, at some time or another, the Mother Hen Advisor wonders if he/she is not prolonging infancy, but shrugs those thoughts off, because it's all for the student's good. Being a Mother Hen Advisor is sometimes necessary—in the early weeks, for instance, when for the freshmen, the break from home and home town may seem cataclysmic—but not too often. The purpose of advising is to encourage human growth and development.*

## 6.5 Seven Mistakes Students In Trouble Make and How You Can Help Them Avoid Them<sup>5</sup>

### **Error 1: Enroll in too many credit hours**

Students think they can “get it all back” through one heroic try and, thus, attempt to make the entire grade point-average improvement in a single semester.

**Good Advice:** Students in academic trouble should take fewer credit hours, not more.

Students who try to make large GPA improvements in one semester usually do poorer work because of the multiplying effects of more quizzes, papers, tests, class hours, etc. A maximum course load for students on probation should be 12 hours or less. A student who earns more average grades makes less grade-point improvement than the student who earns fewer, but higher grades.

### **Error 2: Avoid repeating courses where they earned poor grades**

Students fear repeating courses they earned below-average grades in and, instead, hope to make up the difference in other courses.

**Good Advice:** Students who earned below-average grades should repeat the course as soon as possible. Repeated grades replace the original grades taken at the University in calculating the GPA. Thus, a student who repeats an “F” course and earns a “C” has improved his/her GPA as much as earning an “A” in another course. Most students do improve their grades upon repeating a course because prior exposure to the course makes them aware of expectations and study needs. Repeat the course to improve the GPA and to remove the failure symbolically from the record.

### **Error 3: Fail to resolve “incompletes” within the specified period**

Students hope that they can do nothing and have university officials ignore their incomplete grades.

**Good Advice:** Students who do not resolve incomplete grades usually suffer more serious consequences than if they resolved the incomplete grades. Incomplete grades change to failures after one semester.

### **Error 4: Take advanced courses despite having a weak background**

Many students think they must graduate on time and, therefore, must not interrupt the sequence of courses for any reason.

**Good Advice:** Students should repeat some courses, even when they earn passing grades, if they are weak or ill-prepared to continue the sequence. Often students refuse to take a short delay in completing a sequence, which may cause a greater delay if they fail or are dismissed for academic reasons.

### **Error 5: Taking courses on the advice of a friend**

Students often are “advised” by friends to take courses simply because someone else found these courses met his/her need.

**Good Advice:** Friends with good intentions may misadvise their peers about courses that are easy and appropriate for some, but difficult and inappropriate for others. The probationary student should place only limited faith in the course selections of friends.

**Error 6: Take all their early courses in the area of General Education**

Some students want to get all the core courses out of the way. The reverse of this is true also—some students do not want to take any core courses.

**Good Advice:** Students frequently feel compelled to complete all core courses as soon as possible. With this approach, however, a student may become discouraged and lose sight of the relevance of a total education. An advisor should encourage students to combine general and major course work, and when possible, to take at least one course in their own interest area each semester.

**Error 7: Seek academic or personal help late in the semester**

Students want to succeed on their own and seek help only when it is sometimes too late.

**Good Advice:** Students often fall prey to the myth of self-reliance. They believe that if they are not totally independent they are somehow unfit or unqualified for higher education. This is neither true nor necessary. Students need to know about resources available on campus and to be assured that using support services is expected and encouraged as part of the total academic experience.

6.6 Referring Distressed Students

Many students will seek assistance from faculty or staff, especially related to problems in the office or in the classroom. With other issues, knowing when and how to make referrals is key in helping students regain the emotional balance needed to cope and get back on track. For students with emotional and personal problems, SPSU maintains a Career and Counseling Center, located in Room A243 of the Joe Mack Wilson Student Center (telephone: 678-915-7391, web: [www.spsu.edu/cccenter](http://www.spsu.edu/cccenter)). The director is Phyllis Weatherly.

**Signs of a Student in Distress**

- Excessive procrastination and poorly prepared work, especially if it is inconsistent with previous work; grades consistently decline
- Infrequent class attendance with little or no work completed; excessive tardiness
- Listlessness, lack of energy, or frequently falling asleep in class
- Marked changes in personal hygiene or dress
- Repeated requests for special consideration (e.g., deadline extensions, days off)
- Avoiding participation or dominating discussions
- Disruptive behavior that regularly interferes with effective class management
- Unexplained crying; swollen or red eyes
- Noticeable weight gain or loss
- Expressed suicidal thoughts or covert expressions of suicidal thoughts\*
- Threats to others (verbally or written)\*
- Frequent or high levels of irritable, unruly, abrasive or aggressive behavior
- Regularly discusses (or writes about) personal problems
- Bizarre behavior that is obviously inappropriate for the situation

### **Things to Know**

Try to talk to the student in private. Repeat the essence of what the student has told you so your attempts to understand are communicated. If the matter seems at all serious, contact the Career and Counseling Center staff to discuss your concern or referral options.

- Remember that though it is important to care about the emotional well being of our students, we cannot make their decisions for them.
- Be clear about the need to discontinue any disruptive behavior.
- Remind them that successful people seek support when needed. Problems do not need to reach crisis proportions for students to benefit from professional help.
- Remind them they can speak with a therapist on a one-time basis without making a commitment to ongoing therapy.
- Make sure they know any contact or information shared with the counseling staff is confidential except with the student’s written permission (or in the case of minors).

**\*Take all suicidal (or homicidal) expressions seriously. A student whose behavior has become threatening, violent, significantly disruptive or despondent may need a different kind of approach.**

### **What Happens in Counseling**

- The student will meet with a professional staff member or counseling intern.
- At the first visit, the student will complete intake forms which generally take about 10-15 minutes. These forms help give the counselor a more complete picture of the student and their needs.
- The student will be asked to sign a release form to let the person who referring them know they have kept their appointment, and if the sessions will be ongoing. *However*, if the student decides not to do so, we can’t even share that the student saw us.
- If the student is a threat to themselves or to others, the counseling staff is obligated by law to take action.

### **How to Get Students to Participate**

- Discuss the student’s (or your) concerns and explain the services available to them and how you think those may be helpful.
- Try to get the student to come to the Career and Counseling Center office or to call to make an appointment.
- When referring to the Career and Counseling Center:
  - Ask for permission to share the student’s situation with the counselor.
  - Contact one of the counselors for suggestions before meeting with the student.
  - Have the student make the appointment from your office, or walk them over and introduce them to one of the counselors. **NOTE:** Refer students to the Center—not to a specific person or to the Director. Often they will refuse to see whoever is available because they think they have to see the person you named.
- Check back with the student after you refer him/her. Continue to show caring and concern. Don't try to counsel them after you make a referral.

- Confidentiality is crucial in referral process. Your responsibility is to share information only with the person to whom you are referring unless the situation is life threatening.
- Please remember that the counselors *cannot share* information about the student unless the student signs a release of information form. So, please don't get upset if the Career and Counseling Center doesn't give you feedback.

## 6.7 References for Section 6

The footnoted material in Section 6 of this Guide is based on the following references:

1. The American College Testing Program National Center for Educational Conferences. Making Academic Advising Work. Iowa City, Iowa: 1979, p. 14)
2. Based on Hardee, Melvane D., and Mayhew, Lewis B. Faculty Advising in Colleges and Universities. Student Personnel Series Number 9. Washington, D.C.: American College Personnel Association, 1970, pp. 10-12).
3. Morehead State University. “Strategies of Advisement.” Morehead, Kentucky: Handout from the Office of Instructional Systems, 1981.
4. Crockett, David S. Advising Skills, Techniques, and Resources. Iowa City, Iowa: The American College Testing Program, 1988, pp. 313-316.
5. Russell, James E. “Problem Areas for the Student on Probation.” NACADA Journal, I, 2 (September, 1981), pp. 56-58).