



# TESTING CENTER OPERATIONS MANUAL

Southern Arkansas University

**Address**

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## Testing Center

Welcome to the Testing Center at Southern Arkansas University. The Center strives to deliver quality testing services conducive to student success. These services are available to current students, prospective students, and to the community. Highly qualified testing professionals administer all tests and adhere to the recommended professional standards of the National College Testing Association Professional Standards and Guidelines. The staff make every effort possible to maintain the validity and credibility of all exams by promoting a secure and stress-free testing environment for students. The Center is also bound by the privacy restrictions set forth in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Testing Center at Southern Arkansas University is to provide a professional testing environment for the campus and community that enables test takers to perform at their maximum ability **and** to provide services to assist students and faculty in maintaining the University's goal of academic excellence.

## Customer Service Statement

The staff of the Southern Arkansas University Testing Center is committed to treating each other and all students, faculty, staff and visitors as we would like to be treated ourselves. Every part of the SAU community plays a role in achieving the University's mission. Each individual and office contributes to the achievement of our common goals and the creation of a positive campus climate by being responsive, efficient, and effective.

## Fairness and Nondiscrimination

The Testing Center will administer all tests in a fair, impartial, and uniform manner. No examinees will be given an advantage over any others. All examinations will be monitored to preclude the possibility of dishonesty. Each exam will be administered in a uniform manner with the instructions of the test maker communicated to the test taker. The Testing Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, physical handicap, or sexual orientation in the administration of any tests.

## Security

The Testing Center will maintain security of all tests entrusted to its care. All paper based tests and computer based passwords will be held in a secure, locked facility. No unauthorized person(s) shall have access to the tests. Completed examinations will be returned to the test maker according to the directions he/she specifies, assuring continued security of all test materials.

## About the Center

Southern Arkansas University Testing Center is located on the second floor, Room 216, of the Donald W. Reynolds Campus and Community Building. The Center is staffed by a testing director testing coordinator and work study students. The Center offers three computer labs for a total seating capacity of 42 and two individual testing carrels with computer access.

Each testing carrel is labeled with a seat number and each examinee is assigned a seat number during check-in. There are clocks facing the examinees in each lab.

The Testing labs have a glass window(s) through which proctors observe the examinees while they are taking their exams. For large tests, a proctor is positioned in the room to monitor the exam. In addition, there is camera and audio surveillance equipment in each lab. The proctors can monitor all test facilities through video surveillance.

Testing Center hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and 7:00 am – 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday during the summer. Extended testing hours are periodically held throughout the semester. Some tests are also offered on Saturdays.

### Description of Services

The Testing Center is responsible for the administration of various assessment tests to incoming and current students and other test takers to determine course and program placement. We also administer nationally standardized examinations for the purpose of promoting academic achievement.

### Registration and Fees Charged by the Testing Center

Testing program fees are set by the testing agency. In addition, the Testing Center sets an administration fee for some tests administered and a no-show fee is charged for certain exams.

Some testing programs require pre-payment and pre-registration in advance and examinees must visit the testing agencies website to register and receive a ticket. Only examinees with a valid ticket will be admitted. All examinees must present a valid photo ID (according to testing policies) along with the administration fee if applicable.

### Services for Test-takers with Disabilities

Examinees requesting special testing accommodations must contact the Director of Disability Support Services prior to testing. All timely and complete alternative testing arrangement requests and accompanying documentation are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In addition, accommodations are provided to students as mandated by national testing companies.

### Responsibilities of the Testing Center

The Testing Center will provide a secure environment for testing, monitoring of all testing, and secure storage of tests. All examinations are stored in a locked facility, to which authorized Testing Center personnel only are granted access.

The Testing Center will furnish facilities and personnel for administering tests during its regular hours of operation, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. **It is important to note the Testing Center is NOT authorized to interpret examinations or to authorize additional time or aids not specified in the instructor's directions.** Our guidelines are the directions provided by the faculty or the testing agencies when they request us to proctor their exams.

The Testing Center personnel shall report to the faculty or testing agencies any irregularities in the administration of their tests. Such irregularities include, but are not limited to: suspicion of dishonesty, use of unauthorized aids, or inappropriate behavior. The Testing Center reserves the right to exclude persons from its facilities for repeated instances of inappropriate behavior or failing to observe proper test protocol.

The Testing Center will return examinations to faculty or testing agencies in the manner selected on the Request for Proctoring Services form.

The Testing Center will publish annually a schedule of its major tests. Every effort will be made to post on the Center's web page. The testing agencies also post their testing dates on their individual websites.

Because of contractual agreement with some testing agencies, they have priority over certain test dates. Again, private testing rooms are in high demand; early scheduling by those authorized for their use is strongly recommended.

### Responsibilities of the Faculty

In order to provide the most efficient and consistent testing services to the students, faculty need to be specific as to the instructions and conditions under which examinations are to be administered. For this purpose, the Testing Center has designed a form, the "Request for Proctoring Services." This form (see Appendix A) is available at the Testing Center. We would be pleased to send copies to the faculty or departments by campus mail; just call the Center. **It is important that all applicable items be completed and that a separate request be filed for each exam** (but note that one such form will suffice for several students taking the same test).

Since testing is by appointment, **students** are expected to contact us prior to the date on which they are to test to set up an appointment **for a specific date and time**. Faculty may schedule this appointment for a student if they wish but should be explicit about the fact that they are doing so. We would like to emphasize that testing space is limited, so making appointments early is necessary.

Prior to the appointment date/time, faculty must bring test(s) to the Center. Faculty may opt to mail the exam, but in this case they should be certain that a Request for Proctoring Services is enclosed which is completely annotated with instructions. Faculty should also anticipate the lag time for campus mail. We receive campus mail delivery only once a day.

**Faculty are encouraged to consider other testing sites for unmonitored, open-book, open-notes exams, or other tests where security is not an issue. Students allowed multiple aids (such as books, notes, calculators, spell checkers, etc.) are sometimes disturbing to other students; further, space in the testing room is sometimes at a premium. The Testing Center is not available for entire classroom testing; we simply do not have the space. Please accommodate such needs through your department.**

Please note that the services provided to students with disabilities are done so under the mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### Tests Offered by the Testing Center

The Testing Center is the official testing site contracted with respected testing agencies for the following testing administrations:

#### **Computer-based Test**

ACCUPLACER

CLEP

Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE)

Miller Analogy Test (MAT)

PAN

Pearson VUE

PRAXIS CORE Academic Skills for Education

Praxis II Subject Assessments

PSI

SLS: School Leadership Series

TEAS

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

#### **Paper-based Tests**

ACT National

ACT Residual

Some online faculty exams

The University accepts credit for the Advanced Placement tests taken in high school.

The Testing Center also proctors computer-based and paper exams for SAU faculty and other universities.

### Professional Testing Standards Protocols

- **Security Measures**

The Testing Center will maintain security of all testing programs entrusted to its care. All tests will be held in a secure, locked facility. No unauthorized person(s) shall have access to any testing programs. Completed examinations will be returned to the test maker according to the directions he/she specifies, assuring continued security of all test material. It is important that no examinee gain an advantage by having unauthorized access to any of the exams or by being able to cheat in any fashion during a test administration. Staff will collect scratch paper. No interruptions are permitted during the exam.

- **Surveillance Procedures**

The Testing Center is required to provide a distraction-free, secure testing environment with continuous examinee surveillance. The Testing Center has available clear glass viewing window and wall and live feed software monitoring system.

- **Confidentiality Procedures**

The Testing Center recognizes and subscribes to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Results of examinations will only be released to the examinee upon presentation of proper identification. Testing scores will not be discussed with anyone. Information to other University personnel about examinees is restricted to a “need to know” basis.

- **General Test Administration Procedures**

Testing agencies provide their own test administration procedures. Testing staff will follow each testing agency’s policies and procedures while administering each test. Tests administered for faculty, staff or other universities will follow the same policies and procedures.

- **Handling Irregularities**

Testing irregularities will be reported to the testing agency and/or faculty member following the guidelines for documentation of irregularities outlined by each agency or faculty member.

- **Impersonations**

In a case of impersonation, the Chief of Campus Police will be contacted for questioning. Any tests compromised will be reported to the jurisdictional testing agency as soon as possible, and their guidelines for documentation will be followed.

- **Non-standard Administrations**

The policies and procedures for administering the test would be the same for every test taken. In this way, no examinee is either advantaged or disadvantaged by any variation in administration procedures.

## General In-office Procedures and Practices

### Maintaining Security of Facilities, Equipment, Testing Materials, and Files

- *Keys*

Keys must stay with the Testing Center staff the entire time on duty. Keys may not be left on the desktops or inside desk drawers. Only the full-time Testing Center staff has keys to the security storage rooms where exams are inventoried and the server is housed.

- *Equipment and Furnishings*

All equipment and furnishings required to administer testing programs for the Testing Center are required by the testing agency and are purchased and owned by Southern Arkansas University– Testing Center.

- *Emergency Contact Information*  
Campus Police (870) 235-4100  
Magnolia Fire Department (870) 234-5022  
Magnolia Police Department (870) 234-2323  
Dr. Donna Allen, Vice President for Student Affairs (870) 235-4012  
Dr. Trey Berry, President (870) 235-4001  
Dean Carey Baker, Dean of Students (870) 235-4041
- *Opening and Closing the Facilities*  
Testing Center will open and close its doors according to the hours of operation. Testing Center staff is responsible to ensure all doors are locked and the storage areas secured before leaving the offices. **The Testing Center is closed when the University is closed.**
- *Developing Test Schedules and Testing Locations*  
Testing schedules and testing locations are the responsibility of the Testing Center Director. Schedules are completed in advance before each semester and updated on the website and posted in the Testing Center.
- *Testing Irregularities*  
Testing irregularities and compromises pose a threat to the integrity of the Testing Center. A major responsibility of all test administrators is to take all necessary precautions to minimize the possibility that an irregularity or compromise will occur at the Testing Center. Strictly following all testing service and faculty's policies and procedures is the best way to prevent the occurrence of irregularities and compromises or to minimize the effect if a problem occurs.
- *Cash Receipting and Fee Payment Procedures*  
The Testing Center accepts cash, credit cards, money orders or personal checks. Some testing agencies require online payment and must be paid in advance through the testing agency. Examinees are issued a payment receipt.
- *Refunds*  
Testing agencies will refund the examinee's test fee if they follow the cancellation policy according to the testing agency. Otherwise, they forfeit all fees.
- *Inventory Procedures*  
At the end of the testing day, all testing materials that were used are inventoried and then returned to the secured storage room.

## Emergency Procedures

Any testing personnel of the Testing Center upon learning of any emergency from any source should immediately communicate such information to the director of testing for further instructions.

### *Definition of Emergency*

There are circumstances that may threaten any aspect of the test administration prior to the test date or on the test date. In these circumstances, the testing personnel must make every effort to secure testing materials to avoid any compromises. Depending on the nature of the event, testing personnel may need to cancel the testing session or may resume testing. In any case, testing personnel should document the testing irregularity and describe how the situation was managed. This information should be forwarded to the jurisdictional testing agency.

### *Types of Emergencies and Procedures for Emergencies*

#### Hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, fire, explosions

In the event of an emergency, first concern must be for the safety of the examinees and testing personnel. Within areas of responsibility, safeguarding equipment, records, test materials and other items that may be susceptible to water, fire and wind damage, and/or utility outages will take highest priority.

#### Bomb Threat Procedures

If a bomb threat is received over the phone, remain calm and act courteous. If feasible, notify another person to listen on another extension. Take notes on the caller's threat, tone, voice characteristics, and background noises. Notify the Chief of Police immediately. As soon as possible, stop all testing sessions and evacuate the building. Wait for instruction from the testing director to resume testing or cancel testing sessions.

#### Electrical Failure

Even though electrical outages are rare there will be occasions when electrical failures occur. If an outage occurs, have the examinees stop testing, close the test booklet and place the answer sheets inside the booklet. Collect the test booklets, and lock all test booklets into interim storage. Instruct the examinees and testing personnel to leave the building and wait for the Testing Administrator to inform you if testing is to resume.

For computer-based testing the procedure outlined in each of the jurisdictional agencies will be followed.

#### Violence During Exams

In case of a fight or a disagreement between two examinees during an exam, the testing personnel will collect the testing materials immediately and ask the examinees to leave the testing room. If the violence stills continues inside or outside the room, the campus police department will be contacted immediately.

## Job Descriptions

### Testing Center Director

Responsible for the overall supervision and management of the SAU Testing Center; plans and coordinates all testing services and activities; coordinates and oversees the University's national testing and certification programs and activities; coordinates placement testing, testing accommodations, make-up testing, contracted testing, etc.

#### Duties and Responsibilities:

Serves as the liaison between the University and testing agencies regarding national testing programs and procedures; oversees, reviews, and signs annual center contracts; arranges for space and equipment for contract testing for local, state, and national testing agencies.

All testing agencies rely upon the Director of Testing to ensure that SAUs official Testing Center and all other offsite test locations for SAU conform to all testing program policies and procedures.

Plans, coordinates, supervises, and participates in the day-to-day activities of the following testing programs: CLEP, ACT, ACCUPLACER, PSI, TEAS, PRAXIS, TOEFL, MAT, PAN, Pearson Vue provided through the Testing Center and other offsite test locations for SAU.

Provides management leadership and serves as the liaison between the University and testing agencies such as Pearson VUE, College Board, and PSI Service LLC.

Manages the daily activities of the Testing Center as well as guarantees that rules and regulations of all testing agencies are followed.

Plans, develops, implements, and monitors department goals, policies and procedures for the Testing Center and other offsite test locations for SAU.

Coordinates and supervises scheduled Saturday test dates throughout the year.

Schedules all testing services for the calendar year for the Testing Center and other offsite test locations for SAU.

Ensures that test security standards are upheld and that the confidentiality of all testing records is maintained; develops a security plan and implements security procedures for all assessments housed in the Testing Center; provides security for test copies, answer keys and answer sheets; reports alleged cases of scholastic dishonesty.

Addresses and reports testing irregularities to the testing agency and follows their guidelines for documentation of irregularities.

Hires, trains, supervises, and evaluates Testing Center personnel and student employees to ensure adequate staff coverage to meet daily testing workload.

Serves as the liaison to provide information and support to students with disabilities requesting testing accommodations according to testing agencies' policies and documentation requirements; coordinates and supervises the administration of certain tests for students with disabilities.

Prepares and monitors annual budget and expenditures.

Supervises completion of test reports and assessments for the University.

### Testing Coordinator

Under supervision of the Director of Testing, the Testing Coordinator assists and participates in the day-to-day testing services and performs other related duties as assigned.

### Duties and Responsibilities

Is familiar with all of the exams administered through the Testing Center.

Has a thorough knowledge of and abides by testing policies, procedures, rules, and regulations set by testing agencies and the Testing Center.

Checks in/admits examinees according to strict test protocols; verifies identification and eligibility of all examinees; and helps maintain exam security.

Assists in proctoring test sessions, including traveling to tests as needed or requested by the Director.

Assists in preparing and assembling testing materials.

Assists with testing accommodations.

Alerts promptly the Testing Center director of any irregularities.

Ensures that the testing room and lab and testing materials are prepared as needed; scratch paper, calculators, pencils, and desks are arranged prior to test date.

Responsible for answering the phone, taking messages, and responding to inquiries; communicates with students, faculty, staff, the general public, and external agencies.

Maintains hours established by the University as assigned by immediate supervisor and adheres to University lunch and break policies.

Follows required rules, regulations, and safety procedures as outlined in the *University Handbook*.

Performs all other functions as assigned by immediate supervisor for efficient operation. Work rules, codes of conduct, and other policies are part of the essential functions of the job.

# SAU Campus Map

