



News Release

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University Centers Increase Higher Education Access Statewide

MADISON, S.D. – University centers in Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City are increasing student access to public higher education at a time when South Dakota needs more highly-educated citizens to fulfill current and future workforce demands.

Reports prepared for the South Dakota Board of Regents by the three off-campus centers demonstrate the important role these centers are playing in concert with their partners on the six traditional college campuses. “Campus leadership throughout our system has worked diligently to develop curriculum and programs that meet the needs of students and employers in these geographic areas,” said Regents President Kathryn Johnson. “These university centers help grow our enrollments, send more well-prepared graduates out into the workforce, and reduce the financial burden on students whose circumstances simply prevent them from commuting or moving to a campus location,” she said.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports there are 109,300 South Dakotans who have some college experience but have not completed a degree. Add to that nearly 34,000 people with two-year degrees, and that means nearly one in three South Dakotans age 25 and older could benefit from having access to public higher education. More than a third of those, 53,000, reside in the three most highly-populated counties near where a public university center is located: Minnehaha, Lincoln and Pennington.

Highlights from the annual reports include:

- **Capital University Center, Pierre** – CUC reported an increase in the number of classes and credit hours offered over the past year. While credit hour delivery increased significantly, by 38 percent, in the summer term last year, it was down slightly in the fall and spring semesters, by 3 percent and .7 percent respectively.
- **University Center-Sioux Falls** – It was another record year for enrollment at the Sioux Falls center. There were 3,574 unduplicated students served over three academic terms, up by 2.6 percent over the prior year. Construction began last year on a 50,000 square-foot building to replace space being vacated on the Southeast Technical Institute campus. It will consolidate all science laboratory classrooms into one location.
- **University Center-Rapid City** – A new permanent location for the Rapid City center opened in April on the eastern edge of Rapid City. The center delivered a total of 19,219 credit hours in the past academic year, up from 18,845 the previous year. In the past year, eight new degree programs were authorized for delivery in Rapid City—five bachelor’s degrees, two associate degrees, and an M.B.A. degree.