

Missions of South Dakota Public Universities

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Synopsis: The six public universities in South Dakota are mission-centered institutions. The South Dakota Legislature establishes public universities, and the missions of those universities are spelled out in state law. Only the legislature has the authority to enact laws establishing universities or to repeal existing laws. The South Dakota Board of Regents governs the public universities created by the legislature, consistent with the purposes provided in law. It is the job of the Board of Regents, through its intent to plan and program approval process, to ensure that academic programs at each university remain consistent with that institution's unique mission, and do not encroach into or duplicate other universities' areas of responsibility.

Mission Differentiation at the Public Universities

These are just a few examples of how the Board of Regents' coordinated approach ensures that the unique mission of each public university is strengthened:

- Rather than create a new information systems degree at Black Hills State University, the program is delivered in partnership with Dakota State University.
- Schools of business at each university have a distinct and unique focus: international business at Northern State University, computer and information systems at DSU, tourism at BHSU, agricultural economics at South Dakota State University, and business management at The University of South Dakota.
- In teacher education, an advanced degree in curriculum and instruction sought by West River-area students was transferred to BHSU, rather than be delivered remotely by SDSU.
- Nursing education programs do not overlap: associate degrees are awarded by USD, while SDSU grants bachelor and graduate-level nursing degrees.
- Each institution takes responsibility for specific courses, programs, and degrees at University Center in Sioux Falls, ensuring no costly or unnecessary duplication of programs.

Statutory Missions of the Public Universities (as defined in South Dakota Codified Law)

Black Hills State University, SDCL 13-59-1

The primary purpose of Northern State University, at Aberdeen in Brown County, and Black Hills State University, at Spearfish in Lawrence County, is the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers, and a secondary purpose is to offer pre-professional, one-year and two-year terminal and junior college programs. Four-year degrees other than in education and graduate work may be authorized by the Board of Regents.

Dakota State University, SDCL 13-59-2.2

The primary purpose of Dakota State University in Madison in Lake County is to provide instruction in computer management, computer information systems, electronic data processing and other related undergraduate and graduate programs. The secondary purpose is to offer two-year, one-year and short courses for application and operator training in the areas authorized by this section. This authorization includes the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers with emphasis in computer and information processing.

Except for degree programs in existence during the 1983-1984 academic year, the unique baccalaureate programs authorized for Dakota State University shall not be duplicated by the Board of Regents.

Northern State University, SDCL 13-59-1

The primary purpose of Northern State University, at Aberdeen in Brown County, and Black Hills State University, at Spearfish in Lawrence County, is the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers, and a secondary purpose is to offer pre-professional, one-year and two-year terminal and junior college programs. Four-year degrees other than in education and graduate work may be authorized by the Board of Regents.

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, SDCL 13-60-1

The South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, formerly the state school of mines, located at Rapid City, in Pennington County, shall be under the control of the Board of Regents and shall provide undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in engineering and the natural sciences and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine.

South Dakota State University, SDCL 13-58-1

Designated as South Dakota's land-grant university, South Dakota State University, formerly the state college of agriculture and mechanical arts, located at Brookings, in Brookings County, shall be under the control of the Board of Regents and shall provide undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, home economics, nursing and pharmacy, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine.

University of South Dakota, SDCL 13-57-1

Designated as South Dakota's liberal arts university, the University of South Dakota, established and located at Vermillion, in Clay County, shall be under the control of the Board of Regents and shall provide undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in business, education, fine arts, law and medicine, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine.