



News Release

Contacts: Robert T. Tad Perry, Executive Director
tadp@sdbor.edu

Janelle Toman, Director of Information & Institutional Research
janellet@sdbor.edu

T: 605.773.3455

F: 605.773.5320

www.sdbor.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, December 18, 2008

South Dakota Students Demonstrate Solid Academic Performance

MADISON, S.D. – Students at South Dakota public universities continue to outperform their counterparts across the country on an exam gauging student aptitude at the end of their first two years of college.

The College Assessment of Academic Proficiency Report was presented this week to the South Dakota Board of Regents. The report provides data from a proficiency exam that all students take at the end of their sophomore year at South Dakota public universities. “This information helps us analyze the general education that students receive in the first two years of a college experience, and how our students perform compared to national norms,” said Regents Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry.

On average, South Dakota students who took the proficiency exam in 2007-08 exceeded national averages in all four areas of the test: writing skills, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. There were 4,547 students who took this exam in the last academic year.

Over time, South Dakota public university students’ performance on the science reasoning part of the exam has been particularly strong. For the 10 cohorts tested since the exam first was required in 1998, South Dakota’s institutional scores in science reasoning have been above national averages 100 percent of the time. Overall, South Dakota public universities have had average (mean) scores above the national average 88 percent of the time on all components of the exam.

On a South Dakota system basis, 9 percent of the students tested this past year failed to earn acceptable scores in one or more areas of the exam. Regents’ officials said this was the smallest percentage of students failing to meet qualifying scores on at least one content area since the exam was implemented 10 years ago. Students who fail a part of the test are required to work on their deficiencies and retest within the next academic year.