SUBJECT: College Readiness, Placement, Remediation

The system is part of a number of national initiatives that are working to address the misalignment between high school graduation standards and college admission standards. This disconnect is one of the biggest challenges facing education today. Framing this, approximately one-third of all high school graduates are prepared to do college level work since two-thirds of high school graduates attend a postsecondary institution and 50% of these require remediation. If high school graduation rate is considered, it can be inferred that only 30% of the nation’s population that is 18 years old is so prepared. The high school dropout rate is approximately 10%. Of the 90% graduating, two-thirds (60%) go to a post-secondary institution. Fifty percent of these (30%) require remediation. Thirty percent are college-ready.

One of the major initiatives underway to address this is the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the affiliated national assessments being developed by Smarter Balanced and PARCC. As these come online, there will be opportunities to use the results of these assessments to clearly communicate with high school juniors about their college/career readiness and to reshape the academic experiences offered for seniors to ensure that each student is challenged.

The system is also engaged with Complete College America and a primary focus of this work continues to be placement and remediation. To frame this, a series of reports have noted that students entering college requiring remediation are often doomed to fail. Students requiring remediation in multiple areas or entering multiple levels below college ready rarely complete the requirements for a postsecondary certificate or degree. To address this, South Dakota is working to design and implement placement and remediation strategies that will increase the progression and graduation rates of this population.

The following topics suggested by Council members tie into this:

(Continued)
1. Implementation of Common Core State Standards/Smarter Balanced Assessments – Robert Stein will join the group to discuss this area. The group will focus on planned activities this year as the assessments move to planned implementation in 2014-2015. This will include a discussion of the establishment of score ranges and communication of this to students and parents (college-ready, on-track to be college ready if…, not college-ready). This discussion will also include a review of the efforts underway to slow or to derail these implementations and possible impacts these might have.

2. Working with high schools/providing options for students – This discussion will include steps the system should be taking to align with the Smarter Balanced assessment. One principal area where work will need to continue is the design and delivery of a broader range of senior-year options including transitional courses for those not on track to be college ready, a rigorous senior-year curriculum to ensure those on track do graduate college and career ready, and a series of options for those identified as college ready at the end of the junior year. Campuses will need to ensure that initial and advanced programs in teacher education are preparing students to work in this changed environment. Campuses will also need to consider the new assessment strategies that are at the heart of the Common Core and Smarter Balanced and to work with faculty to reconsider how college courses, especially entry level courses, may need to consider alternate assessment strategies.

3. Campus placement/remediation processes – This part of the discussion will summarize the meeting held in Pierre on September 26. During the conclusion of the meeting, participants identified a number of system/institutional barriers that influence their ability to bring successful features of their pilots to scale. These include further expansion of instructional technology investments made at the system level, access to additional assessment measures (writeplace/ACT writing test) for routing students into college level coursework, SP grade integration for all mastery level courses, and expansion of multiple indicator metrics for determining student placement. The Council will be asked to consider strategies that will continue to promote and to support this work.

4. Tuition rate for remedial offerings – To frame this discussion, the campuses have been asked to provide information about the salaries of faculty assigned to teach remedial offerings. If this is submitted, the Council can review direct costs and decide if a unique tuition rate (or rates) should be proposed for remedial courses.
South Dakota WINS Report

Board of Regents Remediation Redesign Update

September 26, 2013

In September 2012, the Board of Regents held a meeting in conjunction with national leaders from Complete College America to address the issue of remediation within the BOR System. This meeting provided a description of national initiatives which framed consideration of South Dakota’s approaches to placement and remediation. At the end of this meeting, a small grants program funded by the one-time appropriation was announced targeting placement and remediation within the system. After receiving proposals from the campuses, the BOR issued grants to redesign placement processes and remediation delivery, with the overarching goal being to further advance students toward completion, reduce time to degree, and increase student success. Best practices such as co-requisite courses, additional tutoring, competency-based instruction using modularized courses, and more comprehensive placement policies with multiple measures (ACT, GPA, COMPASS, etc.) were included in the funded proposals.

On September 26th, 2013, campuses that were awarded funding through the initiative reconvened in Pierre to discuss their progress to date. Each campus presented the work that has been done in the past year to redesign components of placement and remediation. A summary of the proposals and presentations from each campus can be found at the end of this document. Following the presentations by the campuses, there was a productive discussion that centered around the following topics:

- Similarities that exist between the approaches being employed on each campus;
- Opportunities or synergies that can be refined and result in eventual system-level implementation;
- Operational or System-level constraints being experienced that may impact the ability to bring projects to scale;
- System policies, such as placement guidelines and academic holds, which need to be addressed in order to bring projects to scale.

A number of issues have been identified for broader discussion at the system level to assist in expanding successful initiatives on a broader scale. The system Academic Affairs Council will be taking up these issues during their October and November meetings in an effort to better coordinate successful features of the various pilot programs. Additionally, each campus is currently submitting quarterly reports to update the Board office on the progress of their projects. Most of the pilot projects were first implemented in the Fall 2013 semester so additional assessment data depicting the success of these programs will be forthcoming. Therefore, upon completion of these pilot projects, campuses will report back to the BOR with data on the success of their proposals. Successful projects will be brought to scale and taken into consideration as the BOR looks for ways to utilize different strategies across the entire System.

The BOR is committed to seeing these projects through, and will work with campuses to make the necessary policy changes that will help lead to improved remediation delivery, as well as an increase in student success. Additionally, it is important to note that the BOR is committed to the continued
collaboration with the Department of Education to decrease the number of students requiring remediation directly out of high school. The Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balance assessments provide an opportunity to more systematically identify students who are not college ready at the conclusion of their junior year, and implement intervention in the local school districts. The joint work through the South Dakota Virtual High School to deliver the MyFoundationsLab product to seniors and the effort to design senior level transitional Math and English courses that target student developmental needs are two important initiatives that are expected to work in tandem with campus level efforts.

The specific pilot projects underway at Regental institutions include:

**Black Hills State University**

Black Hills State University has piloted a new placement process for their composition classes. Those students who do not receive a sufficient subscore on the ACT or other placement exams, but have a high school GPA for 3.0 or higher are eligible to take a writing placement exam created by BHSU faculty. If students pass this exam, they can enter directly into ENGL 101 (Composition). By using multiple measures, students are being more accurately placed into the correct course, saving proficient students time and money.

Also, a new composition co-requisite course, ENGL 101C (CoRE English), has been created. This co-requisite course, comprised of English 101 (Composition) and English 032 (Basic Writing) will be taken simultaneously, with students receiving face-to-face instruction for three hours each week, and online instruction through a computer program, MyCompLab, for two hours. The goal is for remedial students to receive the intensive instruction that they need, while simultaneously earning credits for English 101 that count towards graduation. Therefore, the remedial instruction supplements and directly supports what students are asked to master in English 101.

**Dakota State University**

Dakota State University has redesigned remedial strategies for English, Reading, and Math. First, a co-requisite course combining English 101 (Composition) & English 033 (Basic Writing) was created, which is being taken by students who received an ACT subscore between 14-17. The co-requisite course will consist of five days of face-to-face instruction per week, including three days of English 101, and two days of English 033 instruction to supplement what is being taught in English 101. These two sections are taught by the same professor to allow for continuity. Students scoring below 14 will take English 033 as a separate course because they will require more intensive instruction.

Co-requisite courses have also been created for reading. LART 110 (Language Arts) has been paired with seven reading-intensive, content-area courses that meet social sciences general education requirements (Psychology 101; Sociology 100; History 121, 122, 151, 152). These courses are often where students with insufficient reading skills suffer most during their first semesters of college. Students enrolled in these co-requisite courses will strengthen their
reading skills using content that ties directly into what they are learning in a specific general education classes.

A co-requisite course for MATH 103 (Quantitative Literacy) was designed, which will target students who do not need to take College Algebra for their majors. This course will be for those students receiving an ACT mat subscore under 20, and will provide them the extra help they need to succeed in college algebra and in programs outside of those requiring a traditional college algebra foundation.

Northern State University

Northern State University has developed a new placement policy to more accurately place students into English and Reading courses. Students with ACT subscores below 17 will take a reading and writing placement exam, which will be based on reading a selected article and responding in writing to prompts linked to the article. Based on those results, students will be placed into either: 1.) Co-requisite courses of English 101/033, 2.) Reading 041/HIST 151, or 3.) An Intensive Reading and Writing Program which will involve a 6-credit combined course consisting of READ 041 (Reading for College Success) and ENGL 033 (Basic Writing) with extra tutoring and advising. This will allow students who possess the skills to pass the gateway course to take the co-requisite and begin earning college-level credits immediately.

The math program at NSU has also designed a co-requisite course for MATH 101 (Intermediate Algebra) and MATH 021 (Basic Algebra) for students with ACT subscores of 15-17. Students with an ACT subscore of 14 or lower will take MATH 021 supplemented by a two-hour lab section. This will provide both groups of students with more extensive help, with the goal being that more students will successfully complete remediation and their gateway course and a faster rate.

South Dakota State University

South Dakota State University has redesigned their remedial delivery for English and Math, and has piloted some revisions their Summer Bridge Program. In English, SDSU has designed co-requisite courses for both English 101/032 and English 101/033. Students will have the same instructor for both sections of this course. SDSU began to pilot their course in the Spring 2013 semester, and found that sections of the co-requisite courses had a similar grade distribution to English 101 courses consisting of students that did not need remediation. SDSU found that the co-requisite courses allowed for more customized instruction, better equipped students to succeed in English 101, and more effectively motivated students to complete English 032/033.

In math, remedial students are placed into one of three courses based on the results of their Math Index, which is determined by a combination of ACT math subscore and high school GPA. By using multiple measures for placement, students are more accurately placed into the course that best suits them and their abilities. These three courses include: 1.) A co-requisite course of MATH 102 (College Algebra) and MATH 095 (Pre-College Algebra), 2.) the traditional MATH 095
remedial course, and 3.) A highly structured section of MATH 095 (called MATH 099) for students who are in great need of remediation. Co-requisite courses were also designed for MATH 103/093 (Quantitative Literacy) and STAT 281/091 (Introduction to Statistics).

SDSU’s Summer Bridge Program, which allows new students to complete pre-general education courses on campus prior to the start of the fall semester, has created reading co-requisite courses combining READ 041 (Reading for College Success) with either Biology 101 or Sociology 100. This allows students to become more proficient readers before the start of fall semester, while earning general education credits. Plans are being discussed to possibly design similar co-requisite reading courses for other general education courses, as well as to offer the co-requisites during the academic year. Students in the Summer Bridge program also began taking an assessment called StrengthFinders 2.0. This assessment identifies the strengths of students, and therefore allows them to focus on their strengths, build confidence in their academic abilities, and become more engaged in their studies.

The University of South Dakota

The University of South Dakota currently utilizes the Emporium Model for MATH 095 (Pre-College Algebra) & MATH 102 (College Algebra), which emphasizes active learning in a lab environment and is competency-based. This means that students progress through the course at the pace they master the material. These courses involve one class per week with the instructor, and two hours per week in the computer-equipped “emporium” staffed by instructors and tutors. USD added additional lectures and tutoring for students in MATH 095. Also, students who are considered “at risk,” are now required to spend an extra hour every week at the math emporium. “At risk” students include students in MATH 095 who have not yet completed the course after two semesters, and students in MATH 102 who either took three semesters to pass MATH 095, have already failed MATH 102, or placed into MATH 102 with ACT subscores of 20 or 21.

USD also will be managing registration to help ensure that students who need to take successive math courses are taking them back to back. Students who do not take math sequences successively are less likely to complete those courses successfully. USD’s math department will work with the registrar’s office to contact advisors with a list of students who need to complete math courses in order to encourage students to take required math courses earlier. Students who wait to take math are often less successful, as they have forgotten many of the math skills they learned in high school.