1. Definitions of System Undergraduate Degrees and Majors:

1.1. Undergraduate Academic Major
An academic major or primary area of study within a degree program enables students to make in-depth inquiry into a discipline or a professional field of study. Majors consist of a specific set of goals and objectives achieved through a series of courses whose connections define an internal structure and whose sequence advances levels of knowledge and understanding. A major introduces students to a discipline or field of study and related areas through a foundation of theory and method. A major that focuses on a specific discipline draws its courses predominantly from one department. A major that is interdisciplinary or encompasses a professional field of study usually obtains its courses from more than one department.

The number of credit hours required for a major and its organizational structure will vary, depending on whether it aims at disciplinary or professional preparation. Variations are due to the demands of accrediting agencies, certification requirements, professional competence, and expectations. Undergraduate majors require both discipline specific and support courses. Credits required for the major combine with general education core and electives to meet the total degree requirement.

1.2. Bachelor’s Degree
Universities award a bachelor’s degree to a student for satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study (South Dakota Regental System minimum of 120 semester credits; exceptions to this number require Board of Regents approval per Board Policy 2.29). A diploma and transcript signify the measure of achievement and verify the degree.
The bachelor’s degree enables a student to acquire a certain amount of general learning and become proficient in a particular field of study or a profession. The curricular structure of a bachelor’s degree program includes a system general education core curriculum, institutional graduation requirements, support courses, major courses, and electives.

1.3. **Associate of Arts Degree**
An Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree is typically a two-year transfer degree that indicates the completion of a student’s lower division general education requirements and forms the foundation for baccalaureate (e.g., bachelor’s) degree programs (South Dakota Regental System minimum of 60 semester credits; exceptions to this number require Board of Regents approval per Board Policy 2.29). Up to 16 credit hours at the 300 and 400 level may be required. More than 16 credit hours at the 300 and 400 level may be required if specified by an accrediting agency.

1.4. **Associate of Science Degree**
An Associate of Science (A.S.) degree is a terminal degree (South Dakota Regental System minimum of 60 semester credits; exceptions to this number require Board of Regents approval per Board Policy 2.29). However, it is transferable when a specific degree articulation agreement exists between a given A.S. degree and a specific baccalaureate degree (see Board Policy 2:25:4B). Up to 16 credit hours at the 300 and 400 level may be required. More than 16 credit hours at the 300 and 400 level may be required if specified by an accrediting agency.

2. Board of Regents (BOR) action is required to establish a new major or undergraduate degree program.

3. Permission to submit a new major or undergraduate degree proposal is dependent upon prior approval or waiver of an intent to plan.

4. The university Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will review the new major or undergraduate degree request with the system Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The system Chief Academic Officer and the Executive Director of the Board of Regents (BOR) may approve, deny, or send the form back to the campus for revisions.

5. Once the system Chief Academic Officer and Executive Director approve the new major or undergraduate degree program form, the university Vice President for Academic Affairs places the proposal on the university website for review and comment by other Academic Affairs Council (AAC) members. The university Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the system Chief Academic Officer and Academic Affairs Council members by email when the material is available for review. Academic Affairs Council members will direct their comments to the university Vice President for Academic Affairs and the system Chief Academic Officer.

6. The system Chief Academic Officer will place the request on the Academic Affairs Council agenda.
7. Proposals approved by the Academic Affairs Council move to the agenda of the Council of Presidents and Superintendents (COPS).

8. Proposals approved by the Council of Presidents and Superintendents move to the Board of Regents agenda for review and approval.