



# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

<b>Section 8:</b>	General Education	
<b>Title:</b>	Proficiency Examination (CAAP) Guidelines	
<b>Number (Current Format)</b>	<b>Number (Prior Format)</b>	<b>Date Last Revised</b>
8.5	XI.A	06/2016
<b>Reference:</b>	BOR Policy 2:28 Proficiency Examinations BOR Policy 2:7 Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum BOR Policy 2:26 Associate Degree General Education Requirements BOR Policy 2:5 Transfer of Credit	
<b>Related Form(s):</b>		

## I. Policy Overview

The Regental Proficiency Examination requirements are set forth in BOR Policy 2:28, Proficiency Examinations. Only the initial section of the Proficiency Examinations policy is included below. Appendix A contains the complete text of the policy. BOR Policies 2:7, Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum, and 2:26, Associate Degree General Education Requirements, outline general education requirements students are expected to have met prior to sitting for the Proficiency Examination.

### A. BOR Policy 2:28 Proficiency Examinations (Appendix A)

Effective Spring semester 1998, satisfactory performance on the proficiency examination is required for all students seeking a baccalaureate degree from the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education. Effective Fall semester 1999, satisfactory performance on the proficiency examination will be required for all incoming students seeking an associate degree from the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education. To be eligible to receive an associate or baccalaureate degree from a Regental university, students must fulfill the proficiency examination requirement as specified within this policy.

### B. BOR Policy 2:7.3 Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum, Lower Division Credit

#### Hours and Course Requirements/Student Proficiencies

Effective Fall 1999, incoming freshmen must complete 30 credit hours of System General Education Requirements in their first 64 credit hours. The following 18 credit hours of the System General Education Requirements must be completed in the first 48 hours.

Credit Hours	Course Requirement
3	Written Communication (Goal #1)
<u>3</u>	Oral Communication (Goal #2)
3	Social Science (Goal #3)
3	Humanities and Fine Arts (Goal #4)
3	Mathematics (Goal #5)
3 (6 Recommended)	Natural Science (Goal #6)
<b>18 (21 Recommended)</b>	<b>Required General Education Credit Hours</b>

Transfer student with more than 18 credit hours entering from outside the Regental system must complete the above specified 18 credit hours of general education within the first 30 credit hours taken at a Regental Institution.

**C. BOR Policy 2:26.1.B, & 2. A. & 2. B Associate Degree General Education Requirements, Proficiency Examination**

Each student enrolled in an Associate of Arts degree program must take the Proficiency Examination after the completion of 32 passed credit hours or prior to graduation. The student must have completed, or be enrolled in courses required to complete the 18 credit hours specified below (*Same as those listed above*). Students who do not complete the proficiency exam requirements cannot continue registration at the university.

Each student enrolled in an Associate of Science degree program must take the Proficiency Examination after the completion of 32 passed credit hours or prior to graduation. The students must have completed, or be enrolled in courses required to complete, the 18 credit hours specified above in 2 (B) (*Same as those listed above*). Students who do not complete the proficiency exam requirements cannot continue registration at the university.

**II. Regental Proficiency Examination Goals**

- A. Increase standards and quality
- B. Provide additional sources of information for the analysis of general education requirements
- C. Provide information by which students can judge their personal progress
- D. Provide the ability to compare the performance of students enrolled in the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education to national norms

**III. Testing Tool: ACT's CAAP**

After a two year pilot process, the Board of Regent entered into a contractual agreement with ACT, Inc., to use ACT's Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) as the Regental Proficiency Examination. The CAAP is designed to test foundational college skills at or near the end of the first two years of college. As the Regental Proficiency Examination, the following four components of the CAAP examination are used: Writing Skills, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Students are allowed forty (40) minutes to complete each section of the examination.

**IV. Students Testing for the First Time**

**A. Testing Schedule**

There will be two testing periods during an academic year during which the Proficiency Examination will be administered. One testing period will be held during the first two weeks of November and the second testing period will be held during the last two weeks of March. Testing dates will be scheduled individually by each institution at least one year in advance and published in the Master calendar.

**B. Selection for Testing**

Prior to each testing period, RIS staff generate lists of students required to sit for the Proficiency Examination for each Regental institution. Included in this list will be those students who are exempt from testing per the waiver requirements established in section IV.2.d of these guidelines. Students are selected for testing according to criteria established within BOR Policy 2:28.

**1. Criteria for Test Eligibility**

Students are required to sit for the Proficiency Examination during the first semester in which they become eligible according to the criteria outlined below.

**a. Associate Degree-Seeking Students**

- Degree-seeking student registered for credit
- Completion of 32 passed credit hours at or above the 100 level

**b. Baccalaureate Degree-Seeking Students**

- Degree-seeking student registered for credit
- Completion of 48 passed credit hours at or above the 100 level

**c. Transfer Students**

Transfer students are subject to and must meet the Proficiency Examination requirements. Transfer students are eligible for testing as soon as they meet criteria associated with the level of degree they are seeking. Transfer students' transcripts must be analyzed by the receiving institution as soon as possible to insure that students sit for the Proficiency Examination when they first become eligible to do so. Failure to do so may delay testing until later in the student's academic career.

Students who have taken the CAAP exam prior to being selected to sit for the Regental Proficiency Examination, or who sat for the CAAP exam at another accredited non-Regental institution, may not use their scores from those test administrations, in whole or in part, as a substitute for sitting for the Regental Proficiency Examination if those scores meet the Minimum Performance Standards of section IV. E. and if they were achieved no more than 3 years prior to the semester in which the student would be required to sit for the CAAP exam. Transfer students with eligible transfer scores are responsible for providing official verification of the previous scores immediately after receiving notification of the requirement to test.

See 2. c. Exemptions, Transfer Students for SDOS students.

**d. Readmitted Students**

Baccalaureate degree-seeking students who withdraw from the university prior to completion of 48 credits hours at or above the 100 level who are readmitted into an associate degree program, are required to sit for the examination during the first semester in which they become eligible to do so under the criteria established for associate degree-seeking students.

**2. Exemptions**

Students who meet at least one of the following criteria are exempted from the Proficiency Examination requirement on a system-wide basis. All such exemptions are permanent and must be noted in the student's Colleague data file.

**a. Associate Degree-Seeking Students**

- Students who were enrolled in an associate degree program within the Regental system prior to Fall 1999
- Students who have already earned a baccalaureate degree or approved associates degree

**b. Baccalaureate Degree-Seeking Students**

- Students who participated in the Proficiency Exam Pilot Study.
- Students who were exempted from participating in the Proficiency Exam Pilot Study (enrolled at one of the Regental universities from Spring 1996 through Spring 1998 and had 64 or more passed credit hours at or above the 100 level)

**c. Transfer Students**

- Transfer students within the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education who have previously earned an acceptable score on the Regental Proficiency Examination at another Regental institution.

**d. Waivers**

- 1) Baccalaureate and Associate degree seeking students may be exempted from the proficiency examination requirement by meeting the following conditions.

- a. Earn a Composite score of 24 or higher on the ACT examination administered by ACT Inc. (residual ACT test scores may not be used to establish a waiver); OR
  - b. Earn a verbal-mathematics score of 1250 or higher on the SAT; OR
  - c. Meet the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by meeting or **exceeding each of the sub-scores** below:
    - i. Reading – 22
    - ii. English – 18
    - iii. Mathematics – 22
    - iv. Science Reasoning – 23
  - d. Testing Requirements
    - i. To earn a waiver by relying on individual ACT sub-scores, students must meet or exceed all 4 sub-scores listed;
    - ii. Students must achieve the necessary scores on the ACT or SAT prior to their initial entry into a regionally accredited postsecondary institution (postsecondary enrollments for dual credit, concurrent credit, or Advanced Placement do not count as enrollments for the purposes of this waiver process);
    - iii. ACT and SAT scores must be recorded at a postsecondary institution within five years of taking the examination; OR
- 2) Students earning an Associates or Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution in the United States (or those institutions accredited through an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education – Board of Regents [Policy 2:5 Transfer of Credit](#)) may be waived if they earn an:
- a. Associates of Arts
  - b. Associates of Science
  - c. Bachelors of Science
  - d. Bachelors of Arts
  - e. Bachelors of Fine Arts
  - f. Bachelors of Music
  - g. Bachelors of Science in Education
  - h. Bachelors of Business Administration
- 3) Students earning other credentials from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution in the United States are not waived from testing, including:
- a. Associates of Applied Science
  - b. Associates of General Studies
  - c. Undergraduate Certificate
  - d. Undergraduate Diploma
- 4) Students entering the Regental system for the first time prior to 1998, or who have stopped out for more than five years since the completion of required general education coursework shall be exempt from the proficiency examination requirements.
- e. **Other Exemptions**  
Exemptions granted for any reason not listed above must be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Senior Administrator for the Board of Regents.
  - f. **Students Transferring out of the Regental System**

Students who indicate that they will be transferring out of the Regental system are not entitled to an exemption from the testing requirement. Students who fail to sit for the proficiency examination as scheduled due to plans to transfer at the end of the semester are subject to the provisions outlined in IV.F Consequences of Failure to Test.

### 3. Identification of Selected Students

#### a. Official Testing List

Prior to each testing period, RIS staff will generate a list of eligible students at each Regental university who are required to sit for the Proficiency Examination. To the extent possible, students meeting one or more of the exemption or waiver criteria listed above will be identified as earning a waiver on the testing list. Lists will be generated from Census day enrollment frozen file.

#### b. Preliminary Testing Lists

Each Regental institution may generate preliminary lists of eligible students at the beginning of each academic term. This will provide campus staff with preliminary information regarding the number of students who may be required to test. However, the testing list generated by RIS after census date will be considered the official list for the purpose of identifying students who are required to sit for the Proficiency Examination.

#### c. Corrections to the Official Testing Lists

- **Inappropriate inclusion of non-eligible or exempt students:** Campus staff should document students who appear on the official testing list but who are either not eligible to test or should be exempted or waived from testing. Unless staff can document that a student meets one of the exemption or waiver criteria listed above, the student should not be given an exemption. To do so would prevent the student from being tested at a later date. Instead, the student's name should be removed from the testing list.
- **Failure to include eligible students:** Transfer students who would otherwise meet the necessary eligibility requirements but whose transcripts have not yet been processed may have their names added to an institution's testing list by the Proficiency Exam Coordinator.
- **Students who have left the Regental institution:** Students who withdraw from an institution after census date may appear on the institution's testing list. Staff should document students who appear on the official testing list who have withdrawn after census date and remove their names from the testing lists. These students should not be given exemptions as this will prevent them from being tested should they re-enroll at a later date. See also "Deferments of Testing" below. If the student withdraws after the testing period, the student is still held to the consequences of his or her performance on the exam or failure to sit for the exam.
- **Students who appear on more than one testing list:** Students who have dual enrollments may appear on more than one institution's testing list. The institution from which the student is seeking a degree has the responsibility to insure that the student is tested and only the VPAA of the institution may grant the student an exemption or deferment.

### C. Deferment of Testing

1. Students who meet the eligibility requirements but, due to extenuating circumstances, are unable to sit for the Proficiency Examination may petition the Vice President for Academic Affairs for a deferment prior to the test date or not later than the final day of the semester in which the examination should have been taken. In exceptional cases, deferments may be granted for two semesters. Students granted deferments will sit for the examination during the next administration following the end of the deferment.

Examples of extenuating circumstances include:

- a. Participation in an education experience that prevents testing at any one of the Regental institutions
  - b. Medical emergencies
  - c. Personal/family emergencies
  - d. Stop-outs (Addition approved by AAC, 12/7/00)
2. Transfer students who have 48 or more credit hours, have not attended a Regental university in the past two years and who are missing one or more of the general education courses in the required 18 hours, may be deferred for one or two semesters at the discretion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
  3. Students who withdraw between the time the official testing list is distributed and their scheduled testing date do not require deferments. These students should be tested during the next administration in which they are enrolled.

#### **D. Procedures**

##### **1. Notification of Students**

###### **a. Letter of Notice**

Campus staff will notify students of their selection for testing in a timely fashion. Notifications should:

- Inform the student of the testing requirement
- Describe the eligibility criteria
- Provide testing schedule information
- Provide notice of availability of reasonable accommodations
- Outline procedures for notifying campus staff of need for special accommodations, deferment, exemption, or of eligible transfer scores.
- Inform the student of the consequences associated with failure to test
- Request confirmation of receipt of notification

Publication of testing requirement and schedule should be made within campus newspapers, catalogs, and through other appropriate information distribution methods.

###### **b. Responsibility for Maintaining Current Address Information**

Students are responsible for ensuring that the address information maintained within their student records is accurate and up-dated as appropriate.

###### **c. Failure to Respond to Notification**

Students who fail to respond after campus staff have made at least two separate attempts to notify the student of the testing requirements and who fail to sit for the proficiency exam shall be prevented from enrolling in courses for two academic terms unless they otherwise meet the criteria for either an exemption or a deferment criteria as outlined above. Students refusing to sit for the exam have a CPR (Proficiency Exam Refused) hold on their academic record in the Student Information System for two academic terms.

##### **2. Special Accommodations**

Each institution shall give students prior notice that it will provide reasonable accommodations for test takers in keeping with institutional practices implementing the South Dakota Human Relations Act of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (Refer to Board Policy 1:19)

Tests in Braille and large print may be ordered by calling ACT at 800-553-6244, ext. 1576.

##### **3. Off-Campus Testing**

**a. Other Regental Institution**

Students who wish to sit for the Regental Proficiency Examination at a Regental institution other than their home institution must seek and receive approval from the Proficiency Examination Coordinators at both their home institution and the testing institution. The home institution is responsible for insuring that their students are tested. Communication between Coordinators is necessary to prevent inappropriate exemptions, deferments, or holds due to failure to test. Coordinators will also need to insure that these students' answer forms indicate students' home institutions and not the testing institution so that each student's results are sent to the appropriate institution.

**b. Higher education centers in Sioux Falls (UCSF), Rapid City (UCRC), and Pierre (CUC).**

Students seeking degrees from Regental institutions and who are primarily enrolled in courses at UCSF, UCRC, or CUC at the time they become eligible to sit for the Proficiency Examination, may sit for the exam at those centers. Proficiency Exam Coordinators must provide UCSF, UCRC, or CUC with names, test booklets, and answer sheets. The number of additional students who wish to sit for the exam at these centers for sake of convenience should be restricted and must receive approval from both the institutional Proficiency Exam Coordinator and UCSF, UCRC, or CUC.

**c. Distance Education Students**

To the extent possible, students who are primarily enrolled in courses delivered through the use of distance education methods should sit for the Proficiency Examination at one of the Regental institutions. In cases where this requirement would place an undue burden on the student, Proficiency Exam Coordinators may make alternate arrangement for testing at a non-Regental institution site.

ACT has established several requirements that must be followed when the CAAP is administered in an off campus/overseas situation. Failure to follow these requirements will result in nullification of the student's scores.

- Security of tests must be maintained at all times the tests are off campus
- Each person administering CAAP must have completed the official agreement (provided by ACT)
- Each administrator is to follow all protocols stated in the CAAP Test Administration Manual
- Careful count of test booklets and answer sheets must be made before test materials are taken off campus
- Following testing, all materials must be returned to the sponsoring institution and counted to ensure that all materials can be accounted for.

Students will be responsible for providing the Proficiency Exam Coordinator with the name, phone number and business address of a non-relative in their community who is willing to proctor or supervise their testing. ACT requires that test administration staff be selected from one of the following professional groups:

- Faculty members (employed or retired)
- Mature graduate-level students
- Qualified professional educators
- Staff of regional and area Armed Forces commands who are expert in education/training/human resources development
- Test and measurement experts
- Human resource development professionals

The Proficiency Exam Coordinator is responsible for contacting test supervisors to confirm their eligibility, to verbally review test administration procedures and to receive a preliminary affirmation of willingness to abide by the procedures outlined by ACT in the CAAP Test Administration

Manual.

Test materials, test administration manual, and official agreement (provided by ACT) should be sent and returned using a traceable shipping method. Testing must be completed within the normal testing schedule used on-campus to insure that the campus' return shipment to ACT is complete and sent in a timely fashion.

**4. Test Administration**

Unless contradicted by Board policy, procedures used to administer the Proficiency Examination must comply with those procedures outlined by ACT in their annual test administration manual.

**E. Minimum Performance Standards**

In order to meet the satisfactory level of performance required in Board Policy 2:28, students must earn a score at or above the appropriate cut score on each section of the Regental Proficiency Examination.

<b>Exam Section</b>	<b>Cut Score</b>
Writing Skills	59
Mathematics	52
Reading	56
Science Reasoning	54

Students failing to achieve the minimum proficiency level on one or more of the components will be allowed the opportunity to retest. If the student fails to achieve minimum proficiency on one or more components, a CPF (Proficiency Exam Failed) hold will be placed on student's academic records in the Student Information Systems after each testing opportunity. This hold will remain until the student acknowledges the remediation process at which time the hold may be removed. After the final testing opportunity, the hold will remain until he /she meets the minimum required score or achieves alternate certification on all components. Comments will be included on the hold screen to detail the student's testing status (remediation required or not allowed to re-enroll.)

**F. Consequences of Failure to Test**

Students failing to sit for the Regent Proficiency Examination as scheduled will be denied subsequent registration at all Regental institutions. Students who have been denied registration due to failure to sit for the Regental Proficiency Examination may apply for readmission after two academic terms (fall, spring, or summer). If readmitted, they must sit for the examination during the next administration. Failure to do so will result in immediate administrative withdrawal.

If students who have been denied enrollment due to failure to sit for and pass the Regental Proficiency Examination complete a baccalaureate degree at an accredited, non-regental institution and wish to enroll in undergraduate or graduate courses, the Vice President for Academic Affairs may remove the registration hold.

**V. Retesting**

**A. Timeline**

After failing to earn a satisfactory score on their initial test, students must retest and are only required to take those components on which a satisfactory score was not achieved. Students may retake each component up to two times (have two opportunities) and must re-test during their next testing opportunity. A student enrolled at a Regental institution has one calendar year in which to successfully retest on all portions of the exam for which they have not met qualifying scores during the initial attempt and may continue to enroll in courses.

**B. Mandatory Development Plans**

Students failing to earn a satisfactory score on one or more sections of the Regental Proficiency Examination



are required to create, in collaboration with an academic advisor, and follow a development plan for remediation to be completed within one calendar year. The development will include a minimum of 15 hours of remediation for each of the subject areas where qualifying scores were not met on the first attempt. Similar additional remediation efforts should be repeated after the second attempt in any area where satisfactory scores are not obtained, including those situations where a student does not take advantage of the second retest opportunity.

### **C. Test Schedule**

The testing period for retesters will be the week prior to the regularly scheduled two week test administration period in the fall and spring. However, a Vice President for Academic Affairs may, in extreme circumstances, allow a student to sit for a retest outside of the regular test administration period. Any extraordinary testing session must be scheduled within the student's one calendar year retesting period and must not allow the student to exceed the two retest limit as outlined in V.A Timeline.

### **D. Procedures**

#### **1. Notification**

All students failing to earn a satisfactory score on one or more sections of the Regental Proficiency Examination must be notified of the retesting and development plan requirements.

Students in need of retesting should be sent notification when a test administration period is scheduled. The official testing list each institution receives prior to a test administration period shall include all enrolled students who are in need of retesting

#### **2. Testing Accommodations**

##### **a. Special Needs Students**

Each institution shall give students prior notice that it will provide reasonable accommodations for test takers in keeping with institutional practices implementing the South Dakota Human Relations Act of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (Refer to Board Policy 1:19) Tests in Braille and large print may be ordered by calling ACT at 800-553-6244, ext. 1576.

##### **b. ESL Students**

Institutions may provide ESL students with an additional 40 minutes per section when retesting.

##### **c. Distance Education Students**

Students who are primarily enrolled in courses delivered through the use of distance education methods may request alternative arrangements for testing at a non-Regental institution site as outlined in IV.D.3 Off-Campus Testing

##### **d. Students Participating in Internships or Exchanges**

Students participating in university-approved educational activities (i.e., internships, student exchanges) that prevent on-campus testing during regularly scheduled test administration periods may also request alternative testing arrangements as outlined in IV.D.3 Off-campus Testing

### **E. Deferment of Testing**

Enrolled students failing to earn a satisfactory score on their initial test have one calendar year in which to successfully retest. Students who are scheduled for their final retest opportunity may only receive a deferment for medical or family emergencies that prevent testing at any time during the two week test administration period. All such deferments must be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Senior Administrator for the Board of Regents.

Students who are called to active service during their one calendar year for remediation following a failing performance on one or more components of the proficiency exam may complete the remedial plan established with the university. The timeframe for remediation is frozen during the period of active duty and

resumes on the first day of the Fall or Spring term beginning after the date the student is released from active service.

**F. Consequences of Unsatisfactory Performance**

Students failing to achieve the minimum satisfactory proficiency level on their final retest opportunity will be denied subsequent registration at all Regental institutions. Application for readmission will be contingent upon satisfactory performance on the Regental Proficiency Examination or an earned baccalaureate degree from another regionally accredited institution. Students may arrange for retesting during any subsequent administration of the examination and may apply to retest at any Regental institution. Students who perform satisfactorily on the retest will be allowed to register for the next academic term. Students may appeal to an institutional review panel for certification of proficiency using alternate methods.

**G. Consequences of Failure to Retest**

Students who fail to sit for the Regental Proficiency Examination during their final retest opportunity will be denied subsequent registration at all Regental institutions and are not eligible for certification of proficiency through alternate methods. Application for readmission will be contingent upon satisfactory performance on the Regental Proficiency Examination.

**H. Costs**

Regental institutions are authorized to charge a retesting fee equivalent to the costs associated with the purchase of testing materials.

**VI. Certification of Proficiency by Alternate Methods**

Enrolled students who fail to achieve the minimum proficiency level on one or more components of the Regental Proficiency Examination have one calendar year in which to test satisfactorily. Students failing to achieve the minimum satisfactory proficiency level on their final retest opportunity will be denied subsequent registration at all Regental institutions. Students who have complied with the eligibility requirements set forth in VI.A: Eligibility may appeal to an institutional review panel for certification of proficiency using alternate methods. Recommendations of the institutional review panel must be confirmed by the Senior Administrator for the Board of Regents.

**A. Eligibility**

Students who have participated in the prescribed remediation process outlined in V.B: Mandatory Development plans and participated in their second and final retest opportunity following their initial testing are eligible to submit an appeal. Students who fail to sit for the Regental Proficiency Examination during their final retest opportunity will be denied subsequent registration at all Regental institutions and those who did not sit for all retest opportunities are not eligible for certification of proficiency through alternate methods.

**B. Interruption of Academic Career**

Students are denied registration while their appeals are under consideration. Students should consult with their faculty and development plan advisors regarding the appeal process early in the remediation process. Exploration of alternate methods of certification should begin well in advance of the student's final retest opportunity. It may not be possible for students who are successful in their appeal to register for classes during the semester in which their appeal is approved.

**C. Appeal Process**

**1. Written Notification**

Students have sixty (60) calendar days from the date of their final retest opportunity to complete their appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs at the institution where they are enrolled as degree seeking. Students who fail to complete their appeal within the specified time frame may only be readmitted if they are able to show evidence of satisfactory performance on the proficiency exam.

**2. Submission of Appeal Form and Evidence of Proficiency**

Eligible students pursuing the appeal process must submit the following material to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- a. Completed appeal form (Attachment D)
- b. Written statement of the rationale for the appeal
- c. Copy of academic transcripts
- d. Evidence for certification of proficiency from at least one approved alternate method and any supplementary evidence the student may wish to submit

Students must also ensure that copies of their development plan for remediation and participation histories are sent by their remediation advisor to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The burden of proof and persuasion in all appeals for certification of proficiency through alternate methods is upon the student making the appeal.

### **3. Evaluation by Institutional Review Panel**

Upon receipt of a student's completed appeal form and all other required materials, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will convene a meeting of the institutional review panel and will forward copies of the appeal to panel members. The review panel will take action within ten (10) working days of receipt of appeal materials.

The review panel will evaluate the evidence submitted by the student and may either recommend that:

- a. the student be certified as meeting the minimum proficiency level , OR
- b. the student's appeal be denied

Additional discipline specialists may be used by the review panel to assist in their evaluation. The review panel will provide the Vice President for Academic Affairs with a written statement of their recommendation.

### **4. System-level Confirmation of Institutional Review Panel Recommendation**

Upon receipt of the institutional review panel's decision, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will forward the panel's recommendation along with his or her own recommendation to the Senior Administrator for the Board of Regents. The Senior Administrator and Vice President for Academic Affairs will confer. If there appear to be no issues or disagreements, the Senior Administrator will indicate that the campus recommendation is confirmed. At that time, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student of the decision. If there are issues that need further discussion, the Senior Administrator will ask for consideration and recommendation by the Academic Affairs Council before a decision is confirmed.

## **D. Alternate Methods**

### **1. Selection of an Alternate Method**

Exploration of alternate methods of certification should begin well in advance of the student's last retest opportunity. Students are encouraged to work with development plan advisors when selecting an alternate method. Any advisor assisting a student with the selection of an alternate method should consult with the campus ADA representative when the student has a documented learning or other disability.

### **2. Approved Alternate Methods**

The following alternate methods have been approved for use in supplying evidence for the certification of proficiency. Descriptions of each alternate method and minimum standards of performance are included in Appendix E.

Area	Alternate Method
Writing Skills	Writing Portfolio Assessment CAAP Writing (Essay) Test TOEFL Structure/Writing (Computer-based)*
Mathematics	MAA Algebra Test (Calculator-based) Mathematics Portfolio Assessment
Reading	Reading Portfolio Assessment Nelson-Denny Reading Test (G&H) TOEFL Reading (Computer-based)*
Science Reasoning	Science Reasoning Portfolio Assessment

\*Alternate method option limited to international students for whom English is a second language.

## VII. Coding of Tests and Return to ACT for Scoring

### A. Coding of Tests

#### 1. Standard first-time testers (No responses coded in Block P)

##### a. Special Needs

Proficiency Exam Coordinators must insure that the answer form for each student receiving special accommodations is marked as follows:  
Block P, Column I, 0 Special Needs Examinee

##### b. ESL

Proficiency Exam Coordinators must review and verify ESL status for students who have indicated they are ESL students.

#### 2. Re-testers

Block P, Column I, 1 Special Needs Examinee; first repeat  
Block P, Column I, 2 Special Needs Examinee; second repeat  
Block P, Column I, 3 Special Needs Examinee; third repeat  
Block P, Column I, 4 Regular Student; first repeat  
Block P, Column I, 5 Regular Student; second repeat  
Block P, Column I, 6 Regular Student; third repeat

#### 3. Traveling SDOS recipients from non-regental institutions testing at a site other than the institutions which awarded them the scholarship (Circle 1 coded in Block P, Column H)

### B. Return to ACT for Scoring

Institutions will return their answer documents to ACT for scoring and reporting. For tracking purposes, ACT requests that the answer documents be bundled and mailed as four separate groups – Group 1 should include only first-time test takers; Group 2 should include only repeat/special needs students. Groups 3 and 4 should be used for SDOS recipients only . See Appendix F for ACT Reporting Outline for current contract.

ACT will return SDOS recipients' test results to the CAAP test center where the recipients tested and to the Office of the Executive Director. Test administrators at the CAAP testing centers will be responsible for maintaining a list of SDOS students who tested at their site and their attending institutions and will send the applicable results to each attending institution. All institutions are responsible for providing test results to their own SDOS recipients and informing them of continuing eligibility status for the scholarship program.

## **VIII. Reporting**

### **A. Colleague Data Entry**

Student scores must be entered into Colleague. Instructions for data entry are available from each University Data Administrator. Non-course codes must be entered for students receiving deferments, exemptions, and alternate certifications. A “T” code must be used for eligible transfer scores (see IV. B. c.) in order to assure that those scores are not included in the Board Reports below.

If a student transfers within the system after sitting for the Regental Proficiency Examination, his or her scores should be entered in student’s record at the enrolling institution. This will prevent the student’s name from appearing on subsequent testing lists. However, when entering the student’s information, staff should also enter “Took exam at (name of institution)” in Field 14. This will prevent the student’s score from being used in the ACT/CAAP Gains report for more than one institution.

### **B. Board Reports**

#### **1. Test Administration Summaries**

An annual proficiency exam report is provided to the Board at the end of each academic year. These reports include information on students taking the test for the first time and on students who retested. Information reported includes: the number of students tested, deferred, and exempted; the number of students who failed to sit for the exam; institutional means; score distributions; and passing rates

Unless directed to do otherwise, reported passing rates should include all tested students.

#### **2. ACT/CAAP Gains**

Annually, information is submitted to ACT on all students sitting for the Proficiency Examination for the academic year (fall and spring) except those who are retesting, received special testing accommodations for a certified disability or for whom English is a second language. Institutions are responsible for sending a data disk containing students’ names, SSN, ACT scores and/or Compass scores, and CAAP scores to ACT.

ACT will compare students ACT scores and Proficiency Examination scores to determine level of student gain. At the end of their analysis, ACT staff sends final reports to the Director of Academic Assessment for the Board of Regents.

## **IX. Appendices**

- A. BOR Policy 2:28 Proficiency Examination**
- B. Development Plan Forms**
- C. Scenario Timelines**
- D. Alternate Certification Appeal Form**
- E. Description of Alternate Methods**
- F. ACT Reporting Outline**

**Appendix A**  
**BOR Policy 2:28 Proficiency Examination**

**1. Requirement**

Effective Spring semester 1998, satisfactory performance on the proficiency examination is required for all students seeking a baccalaureate degree from the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education. Effective Fall semester 1999, satisfactory performance on the proficiency examination will be required for all incoming students seeking an associate degree from the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education. To be eligible to receive an associate or baccalaureate degree from a Regental university, students must fulfill the proficiency examination requirement as specified within this policy.

Enrolled students who have already earned a baccalaureate degree are exempt from this requirement.

**2. Criteria for Test Eligibility**

**A. Baccalaureate**

1. Degree-seeking students registered for credit.
2. Completion of 48 passed credit hours at or above the 100 level. Students will sit for the examination during the first semester in which they become eligible in terms of passed credit hours.

**B. Associate**

1. Degree-seeking students registered for credit.
2. Completion of 32 passed credit hours at or above the 100 level. Students will sit for the examination during the first semester in which they become eligible in terms of passed credit hours.

**3. Waivers**

A. Baccalaureate and Associate degree seeking students may be exempted from the proficiency examination requirement by meeting the following conditions.

- 1) Earn a Composite score of 24 or higher on the ACT; OR
- 2) Earn a verbal-mathematics score of 1250 or higher on the SAT; OR
- 3) Meet the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks established for each of the equivalent sub-scores including; OR
  - a. Reading - 22
  - b. English - 18
  - c. Mathematics - 22
  - d. Science Reasoning – 23
- 4) Earn an Associates or Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution in the United States;

B. To be eligible for the exemption, student ACT/SAT scores must be obtained prior to their first semester of postsecondary enrollment, either within or external to the Regental system.

**4. Deferments**

Students who meet the eligibility requirements but, due to extenuating circumstances, are unable to sit for the examination may petition the Vice President for Academic Affairs for a deferment prior to the test date or no later than the final day of the semester in which the examination should have been taken. Students granted deferments will sit for the examination during the next administration following the end of the deferment.

**5. Consequences of Noncompliance**

Failure to sit for the examination as scheduled, whether initially or following a deferment, will result in denial of subsequent registration at all regental institutions. Students who have been denied registration due to failure to take the proficiency examination may apply for readmission after two academic terms (fall, spring, or summer). If readmitted, they must sit for the examination during the next administration. Failure to do so will result in immediate administrative withdrawal.

**6. Retesting**

Students are required to perform satisfactorily on all components of the examination. Students failing to achieve the minimum proficiency level on one or more of the components will be allowed the opportunity to retest. Students failing to test satisfactorily in the fall must retest no later than the following fall's administration, and students failing in the spring must retest no later than the following spring's administration. In the interim, students may continue to enroll in courses.

When first sitting for the examination, students must take the examination as a whole. When retesting, however, students will take only those components on which a satisfactory score was not achieved. Students who must retest on one or more components may retake each one up to two times within the time frame allowed as outlined above. All retests must be taken during the regularly scheduled test administration periods in the fall and spring.

As preparation for retesting, students are required to develop, in collaboration with an academic advisor, a development plan for remediation to be completed within one year.

**7. Unsatisfactory Performance on the Retest**

Students who do not achieve the minimum satisfactory proficiency level on the retest will be denied subsequent registration at all regental institutions. Application for readmission will be contingent upon satisfactory performance on the proficiency examination. Students may arrange for retesting during any subsequent administration of the examination. Students may apply to retest at any regental institution. Students who perform satisfactorily on the retest will be allowed to register for the next term.

**8. Appeals for Certification of Proficiency by Alternate Methods**

Students failing to achieve the minimum satisfactory proficiency level as provided in section 6 above may appeal to an institutional review panel for certification of proficiency using alternate methods. Such certifications must be confirmed by a system-wide faculty review committee.

**9. Transfer Students**

Transfer students are subject to and must meet the proficiency examination requirements.

Transfer students within the South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education are subject to the policy as outlined above. For students who have been denied registration due to failure to take the proficiency examination, applications for readmission will be filed with and resolved by the receiving institution.

**10. Proficiency Examination Fees**

Each university is authorized to charge students fees to cover the cost of retesting.

**11. Reasonable Accommodations**

Each institution shall give students prior notice that it will provide reasonable accommodations for test takers in keeping with institutional practices implementing the South Dakota Human Relations Act of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Refer to Board Policy 1:19.)

**12. Classes Missed During Test Administration**

Participation in the proficiency examination as scheduled constitutes a University excused absence. The University will supply each student with a notice to that effect. Students required to participate in the proficiency examination process may not be penalized in either their courses or in official university activities. Students required to participate in the proficiency examination will be allowed to make up any class events, including quizzes and exams, given during their absence. Students must be assured equity by being given make up exams, quizzes/assignments of equivalent content and expectations and within a reasonable time of the excused absence.

**SOURCE: BOR December 1997; BOR March 1998; BOR August 1999; BOR, January 2000; BOR October 2000; BOR December 2014; BOR March-April 2016.**





**Development Plan for Meeting Proficiency Requirements**

**II. Development Plan**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Development Plan Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the proficiency area this development plan is designed to address:

\_\_\_\_\_ Writing \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics \_\_\_\_\_ Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Science Reasoning  
\_\_\_\_\_ Skills \_\_\_\_\_

1. Student's comments regarding his or her performance on the Proficiency exam, level of preparation prior to sitting for the exam, and the remediation necessary.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Identify the strategies by which the student's deficiency will be addressed. Include the methods to be utilized, the timeline for completion, and the dates on which the student and the development plan advisor will meet to review the student's progress.

Method	Timeline	Review Date(s)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Student: I understand that I am not eligible to submit a request for certification of my proficiency through an alternate method if do not faithfully participate in the activities outlined in this document.

Development Plan Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(signifies acceptance of the plan)

Refusal to Participate in Developmental Activities: I refuse to participate in the developmental activities made available to me. I understand that if I fail to demonstrate proficiency (by achieving a satisfactory score on retests within the prescribed time limit) I will be dismissed from the South Dakota System of Higher Education and prevented from registering for classes.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(signifies refusal of the plan)

## Development Plan for Meeting Proficiency Requirements

### III. Progress Review Meeting Notes

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Development Plan Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

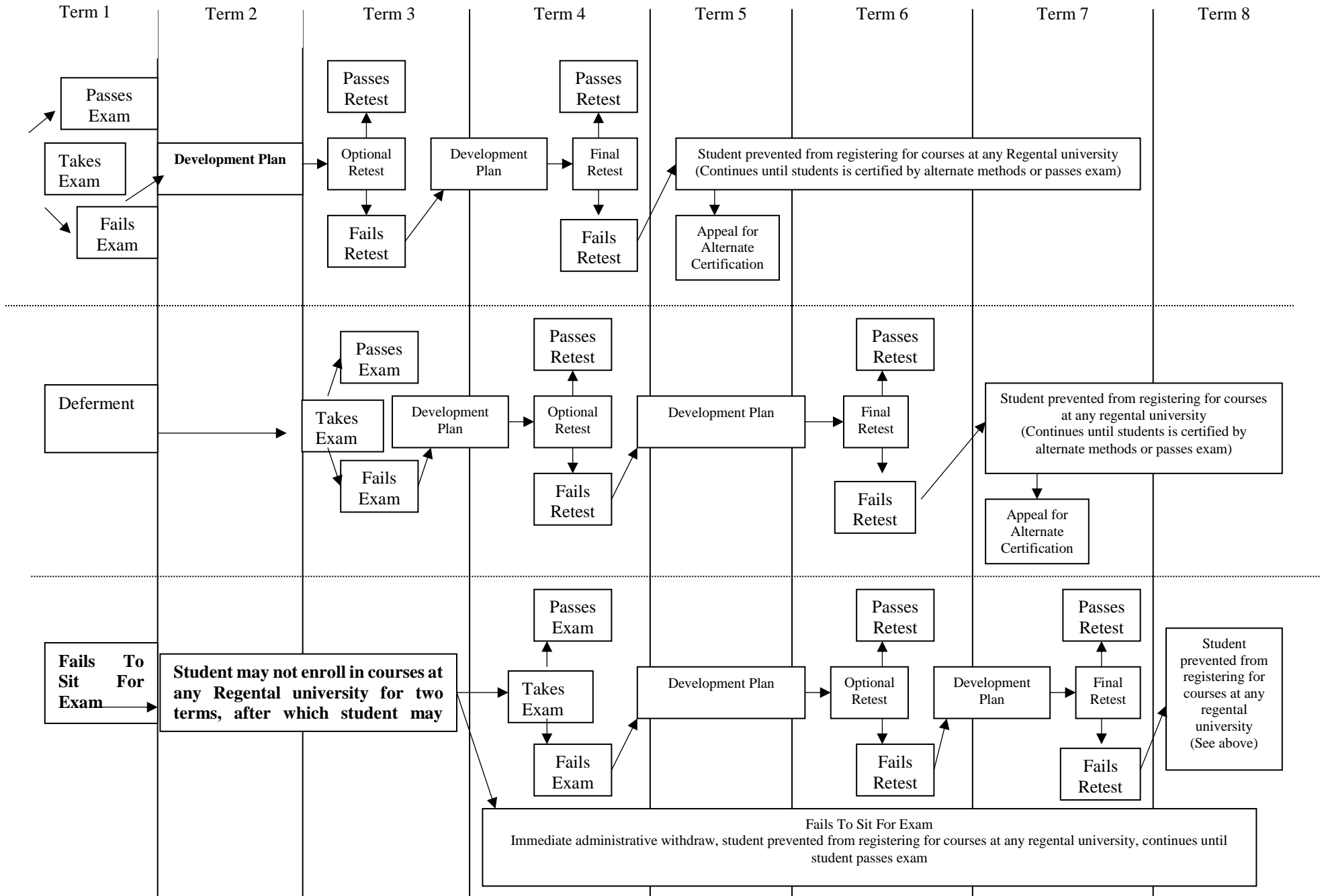
This page should be used by the development plan advisor to record and submit the results of progress meetings. The development plan advisor and student shall review the information provided and initial in the space below the date in the first column to indicate their approval of the content.

1. Student's comments:

2. Development plan advisor's comments on the student's progress regarding the methods being used and specific suggestions for continuation or alteration of current strategies:

Date	Method	Progress Notes	Timeline	Date of Next Review

## Appendix C Regental Proficiency Examination Scenario Timelines



**Appendix D**  
**Appeal for Certification of Proficiency Using Alternative Methods**

Directions to the Student: Complete the student section of this form and attach all supporting documentation including academic transcripts and a written explanation regarding your rationale for appeal. Contact your remediation advisor to ensure that a copy of your developmental plan for remediation and participation history is forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**I. Student Information**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Street* *City* *State* *Zip Code*

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Street* *City* *State* *Zip Code*

Local Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

**Proficiency Exam Scores:**

	Initial Testing	First Retest	Final Retest
Writing Skills	_____	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____	_____
Reading	_____	_____	_____
Science Reasoning	_____	_____	_____

Appealing for alternative certification in the proficiency area of (check all that apply):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing Skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reading
- \_\_\_\_\_ Science Reasoning

List alternate method(s) used to demonstrate proficiency: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

University Review Panel Action: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Not Approved (Attach Written Explanation)

Chair's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E Description of Alternate Methods

### I. Writing Skills

Students appealing in the area of Writings Skills should select one of the following alternate methods:

#### A. Writing Portfolio Assessment

1. **Required:** One (1) written essay based on a writing prompt administered to the student in a supervised setting with a 100 minute time limit and three (3) writing samples from previously submitted work. The three writing samples should be from at least two separate courses; one of which should be from a course above the 100 level within the student's major.
2. **Optional:** Essay exams, papers (essay, research, reaction, creative, journal, rough draft/re-write), projects, homework, in-class exercises, remediation exercises.
3. **Evaluation Process:** Written essay will be evaluated using a six-point scale (Attachment II). In addition to the assignment of the overall score, the rater should also provide a brief narrative regarding the evidence of the student's writing skills in the areas of punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, organization, strategy, and style. The institutional review panel reviews and evaluates the entire portfolio using a six-point scale.
4. **Standard:** Three (Adequate) based on a six-point scale.

#### B. CAAP Writing Essay Test

1. **Description:** Two 20 minute writing tasks from short prompts that identify a specific hypothetical situation and audience. Students must take a stance on the hypothetical situation and explain to the identified audience why the position taken is the best (or better) alternative.
2. **Evaluation Process:** Essays are returned to ACT for evaluation. Each essay is read by two trained raters who independently assign a score based on ACT's six-point, modified-holistic scoring system. The scores from the two raters for each of the essays (four scores) are averaged for the reported score. The two raters' scores for each essay must either agree or be adjacent to be averaged. If the raters' scores differ by two or more points, a chief scorer adjudicates and determines the reported score.
3. **Standard:** Three (Adequate) based on a six-point scale.

#### C. TOEFL Writing Test (Computer-based)

1. **Description:** The writing section measures the ability to write in English, including the ability to generate, organize, and develop ideas, to support ideas with examples or evidence, and to compose a response to one assigned topic in standard written English. (Note: TOEFL scores are valid for two years after the test date and there is no limit to the number of times a student can take the test).
2. **Evaluation Process:** Tests are scored by ETS.
3. **Standard:** 20 (computer-based), 19 (internet-based) 55 (paper-based)

### II. Mathematics

Students appealing in the area of Mathematics should select one of the following alternate methods:

#### A. Mathematics Portfolio Assessment

1. **Required:** One (1) open-ended mathematical problem administered to the student in a supervised setting with a 100 minute time limit and three (3) learning artifacts specified by the VPAA for documentation of mathematical ability.
2. **Optional:** Additional projects selected by the student.
3. **Evaluation Process:** Institutional review panel reviews and evaluates the entire portfolio using a six-point scale (Attachment III). An overall score will be assigned based on the degree to which the portfolio provides evidence of the student's ability to (1) use mathematical symbolism and mathematical structure to model and solve problems, (2) to communicate in mathematical terms, and (3) to order and analyze quantitative information to make judgments of real world situations.

4. **Standard:** Three (Adequate) based on a six-point scale.

**B. MAA Algebra Test (Calculator-based)**

1. **Description:** Forty-five minute test on 32 items on the arithmetic of rational numbers, operations with algebraic expressions, linear equations, and inequalities, factoring, algebraic functions, exponents and radicals, graphing and distance, fractional and quadratic equations, inequalities, absolute values, systems of equations, word problems, logarithms, functions, and complex numbers. Five items involve estimation and eight items require the use of a scientific calculator.
2. **Evaluation Process:** Students answers are corrected on campus through the use of a grading guide supplied by the MAA.
3. **Standard:** At least 20 of the 32 items (62.5%) must be answered correctly.

**III. Reading Skills**

Students appealing in the area of Reading Skills should select one of the following alternate methods:

**A. Reading Portfolio Assessment**

1. **Required:** One (1) examination of reading comprehension administered to the student in a supervised setting with a 100 minute time limit based on a section of text selected from a textbook used in a general education course (humanities, fine arts, or social sciences) taken by the student and three (3) additional learning artifacts as specified by the VPAA. The examinations should be designed to test the student's ability to refer, clarify, analyze, determine implicit meanings, draw conclusions, make comparisons, and generalize beyond the text. The exam will be administered to the student in a supervised setting. Both the section of text and the examination should be included within the portfolio.
2. **Optional:** Additional projects as selected by the student.
3. **Evaluation Process:** Institutional review panel reviews and evaluates the entire portfolio using a six-point scale (Attachment IV). An overall score will be assigned based on the degree to which the portfolio provides evidence of the student's ability to derive meaning from reading passages, and to understand and interpret basic concepts and theories of the humanities and arts.
4. **Standard:** Three (Adequate) based on a six-point scale.

**B. TOEFL Reading Test (Computer-based)**

1. **Description:** Measures the student's ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to academic texts used in North American colleges and universities. (Note: TOEFL scores are valid for two years after the test date and there is no limit to the number of times a student can take the test).
2. **Evaluation Process:** Tests are scored by ETS.
3. **Standard:** 20 (computer-based), 19 (internet-based), 55 (paper-based)

**C. Nelson-Denny Reading Test (G & H)**

1. **Description:** A two-part timed-test that measures vocabulary development (80 items) and comprehension (38 items).
2. **Evaluation Process:** Students answers are corrected on campus through the use of a grading guide supplied by the authors of the test.
3. **Standard:** Total score equivalent at or higher than the 14<sup>th</sup> Grade level

**IV. Science Reasoning**

Students appealing in the area of Science Reasoning should select one of the following alternate methods:

**A. Science Reasoning Portfolio**

1. **Required:** One (1) open-ended science reasoning problem administered to the student in a supervised setting with a 100 minute time limit and three (3) learning artifacts specified by the VPAA for documentation of science reasoning ability
2. **Optional:** Additional projects selected by the student.

3. **Evaluation Process:** Institutional review panel reviews and evaluates the entire portfolio using a six-point scale (Attachment V). An overall score will be assigned based on the degree to which the portfolio provides evidence of the student's ability to (1) design experiments, (2) understand, analyze, and compare alternate hypotheses or viewpoints, and (3) read and critically evaluate data, (4) interpret experimental results, and (5) demonstrate an understanding of fundamental principles of natural sciences.
4. **Standard:** Three (Adequate) based on a six-point scale.

**Appendix F**  
**ACT Reporting Outline**

**CAAP South Dakota Contract**

Institutions will return four groups of answer documents to ACT:

Group 1: Standard first-time testers

Group 2: Retesters, special needs students, and Sinte Gleska University students

Each Test Administration

(once in November; once in March)

For each test administration session, a regental institution will receive:

- The standard reporting package for each of the four testing groups, which includes:
  - Two copies of the Student Score Report (one for the student and one for the school)
  - One Certificate of Achievement for each student scoring at or above the national mean
  - A Student Roster Report
  - One Institutional Summary Report (when at least 25 students tested in the group)
  - Student Interpretive Guides for the Student Score Reports.
- One CD containing all student records from Groups 1, 2, and 3.

For each test administration session, the SD Board of Regents will receive:

- A Student Roster Report for every scoring batch of Group 3 and Group 4 students.
  - ACT will provide the SD Board of Regents with the CAAP Score Report Interpretive Guide for Students in PDF format.

Annual Reporting

(To be provided before Oct. 1)

Each Board of Regents institution will receive:

- A Combined Institutional Summary Report for the year.
  - The Combined ISR will include all scoring batches from Groups 1, 2, & 3.

The SD Board of Regents will receive:

- A copy of every Combined Institutional Summary Report ACT generates for the sites listed above.