



# News Release

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## Survey Gauges Student Experiences on Campus

ABERDEEN, S.D. – A national survey of students' college experience finds that South Dakota's public universities rate well when it comes to student-faculty interaction, collaborative learning, and the campus environment, but could do more to increase academic challenge and enrich the educational experience.

This is the second year that all six public universities in South Dakota participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which was developed by research centers at Indiana University.

“When it comes to factors affecting whether students stay in college, the interaction they have with faculty and a supportive campus environment are very important,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “In the survey, more than 80 percent of our students rated their entire educational experience as good or excellent.”

Jewett also noted that about 80 percent of the South Dakota public university students responding to the NSSE survey said that if they could start over again, they probably or definitely would go to the same university again.

Similar to last year, South Dakota's public higher education system received lower marks for the level of academic challenge and enriching educational experiences. The regents' executive director, Robert T. Tad Perry, said survey findings in these two areas were interesting.

“Students perceive that too many of their courses emphasize memorization instead of higher thinking skills, and they also report a lower number of readings and writing assignments,” Perry said. When it comes to enriching educational experiences, Perry said South Dakota students consider their educational experience to be pretty similar. There is also a lack of desire by some students to take foreign language courses or study abroad, according to the survey.

“These responses help us identify the progress we've made and the challenges we face as a public university system,” Jewett said. “Our goal is to increase access to higher education for more South Dakota students and to improve the academic quality and performance of our university system. As they adjust their practices and policies, this kind of student feedback can be very helpful to our six institutions.”