



News Release

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National Study: South Dakota Public Higher Education More Efficient

ABERDEEN, S.D. – A study conducted by the University of Delaware says South Dakota’s public higher education system has lower instructional costs but higher levels of faculty productivity than national averages.

“South Dakota public universities have participated in this study for several years now, and consistently the results show we deliver a quality educational experience in a cost-effective way,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “Taxpayers demand a good return on their investment, and South Dakota measures up well against the rest of the country.”

Taking a look at 2002 costs for South Dakota public universities compared to national benchmarks:

- South Dakota’s average instructional expenditures per student were \$4,084, compared to the national average of \$5,769;
- Instructional expenditures in South Dakota averaged \$149 per student credit hour, compared to \$205 nationally;
- 92 percent of instructional expenditures was dedicated to personnel costs in South Dakota, compared to 93 percent nationally;
- The average faculty member in South Dakota taught more students (17.7 vs. 15.8) and more organized class sections, including labs (4.4 vs. 3.6);
- In South Dakota, a regular faculty member is more likely to teach an organized undergraduate class section than an adjunct instructor or graduate assistant (85 percent vs. 72 percent nationally). “This contrast becomes even more evident in undergraduate laboratory courses, where 74 percent of those are taught by regular faculty members in South Dakota compared to 38 percent nationally,” said Robert T. Tad Perry, the regents’ executive director.

All six public universities in South Dakota participated in the study, which is designed to establish national benchmarks for instructional cost and productivity comparisons. Across the country, 153 universities participated in the Delaware study, including research, doctoral, comprehensive, baccalaureate, and engineering schools.