



News Release

Contacts: Robert T. Tad Perry, Executive Director
tadp@sdbor.edu

Janelle Toman, Director of Information & Institutional Research
janellet@sdbor.edu

T: 605.773.3455

F: 605.773.5320

www.sdbor.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, December 21, 2006

South Dakota College Students Perform Well

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents reports that students at its public universities outperform their counterparts nationwide on two important measures of academic progress.

The regents this month reviewed the College Assessment of Academic Proficiency Report, which combines information from two sources: a proficiency exam that all students take at the end of their sophomore year at South Dakota public universities and an assessment of student gains in postsecondary education when considering their ACT scores prior to entering college.

“These measurements are important to help us gauge the ‘value added’ of the college experience,” said Regents’ Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry.

On average, South Dakota public university students who took the proficiency exam in the 2005-06 academic year exceeded national averages in all four areas of the test: writing skills, math, reading, and science reasoning. And, for the first time since the proficiency exam began as a requirement in 1998, all six public universities had scores above the national mean in each of the four exam sub-tests. “Students in South Dakota consistently score highest on the writing skills portion of the exam, followed by reading, science reasoning, and math, in that order,” Perry said.

On a system basis, Perry noted the percentage of students needing remedial help in one or more areas of the exam was 9.3 percent last year, down from 9.7 percent in 2004-05 and 9.9 percent in 2003-04.

When assessing achievement gains of South Dakota students who took the ACT college entrance exam and then later took the proficiency exam after their first two years of college work, the report indicates South Dakota students demonstrated a higher percentage of gains than did students on average in the national reference groups. The greatest percentage of South Dakota students made gains in science reasoning (98 percent), followed by mathematics (96 percent), reading (93 percent), and writing (93 percent).