



News Release

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National Survey Gathers Information on Student Experiences

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents heard a report today on the results of a national survey used to assess student engagement in a variety of educational practices inside and outside of the classroom associated with student satisfaction, persistence, and graduation rates.

Four administrations of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) have been taken by all six of South Dakota’s public universities. NSSE was developed by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning. This most recent survey held responses from a total of 2,378 public university students. First-year students and seniors are surveyed.

“This survey is a good tool for the regents. We can see from the students’ responses where the universities need to improve and where they are performing above average,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “And by looking across the past years we can see if changes we have made have resulted in improved perception.”

Benchmarks of the survey include: level of academic challenge, active/collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching education experience, and supportive campus environment.

Seniors perceived significantly higher levels of engagement on four of the five benchmarks. These findings are reflected in the fact that retention may be stronger for those students who are offered more engaging experiences.

First-year students perceived a significantly stronger supportive campus environment than seniors. This finding was consistent with national norms.

According to Regents Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry, “Most institutions are seeing growth since the introduction of the survey. Another positive is that the senior-year students are showing higher perceptions of satisfaction than the first-year students, therefore the longer we have them in the system the more satisfied they are with their educational experiences.”