



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, June 28, 2007

Another Record-Setting Year for University Center

BROOKINGS, S.D. – It was another record-setting year for University Center, the public higher education center in Sioux Falls. Enrollments hit all-time highs in many areas, and planning moved into the final stages for new classroom and research facilities, Executive Dean Mark Lee told the South Dakota Board of Regents today.

University Center served a total of 3,262 students over the summer, fall, and spring terms in the past year. “The fall semester showed an 11 percent increase in total credit hours delivered, and a nearly 3 percent increase in unduplicated headcount over the previous fall,” Lee said. An even-stronger showing in the spring semester produced an 11.2 percent increase in credit hours delivered and an 11.1 percent increase in unduplicated headcount over the previous spring.

Lee said increases in headcount over the past five years occurred in all age categories. “Our core student population is still dominated by non-traditional students who live and/or work in Sioux Falls,” Lee said. In many cases, if younger students attend University Center, they are actually taking most of their classes on one of the main university campuses and just take one class in Sioux Falls. The average age for a University Center student is nearly 28.

Planning has been completed for a new classroom building at University Center which will feature 55,100 square feet of classroom and office space, plus 3,200 square feet for a 120-seat lecture hall. The new Graduate Education and Applied Research Center (known as the GEAR center) will include 21,000 square feet of laboratory, support, and administrative space. The 2010 Center for the Development of Light-Activated Materials is the first tenant for the GEAR center and will occupy about 60 percent of the available lab space.

In the past year, 11 degree programs have been approved at University Center, all to be delivered by public universities from across the state. The center earlier announced receipt of an initial \$100,000 grant from the Osher Foundation to establish the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. More than 120 members already have joined the institute and are enrolled in special courses and programs emphasizing continuing education and lifelong learning. If a final grant request is successful, University Center could receive a \$1 million endowment to permanently support the institute’s work in Sioux Falls.