



# News Release

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## **External Support Tuition Rate Lowered**

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota public universities have lowered a special tuition rate they charge for awarding credit earned from outside workshops and conferences, making it more affordable for teachers and others who seek continuing education. The change—from \$66.05 to \$40 per credit hour—takes effect when the fall semester begins Sept. 4.

The so-called “externally-supported tuition rate” is charged when university credit, either undergraduate or graduate, is granted for courses offered by third-party providers. “Many times, the sponsors of workshops, conferences, or other continuing education opportunities want to offer college credit as an option for their participants,” Sam Gingerich, system academic officer for the South Dakota Board of Regents, explained. “An external self-support rate may be charged when the third party pays for the instructor’s salary, course materials, and travel expenses for the instructor.”

The Board of Regents this month decided to lower the rate to \$40 per credit after learning its rate was higher than others in the region. A national consultant who recently reviewed teacher education programs in the regents’ system said the higher rate of \$66.05 appeared to be a barrier to South Dakota public universities from working more closely with school districts and others to offer continuing education opportunities, Gingerich said.

“Every five years, South Dakota elementary and secondary teachers must earn at least three college credits out of the six credits required overall to maintain their certification. K-12 school systems and their teachers are major beneficiaries of the external tuition rate, so we felt it was important that our public universities be as competitive as possible in this area,” said Nancy Hall, chair of the Education Discipline Council and dean of the College of Education at Black Hills State University. “As a university system, we see a real potential in the market to help school districts with quality, continuing education opportunities,” she said.

Gingerich’s office reviews all coursework approved in the Board of Regents’ system for the externally-supported tuition rate. Academic offices at any of the six South Dakota public universities can assist third-party providers in applying for the special rate. For more information, contact Gingerich at (605) 773-3455 or e-mail him at [samg@sdbor.edu](mailto:samg@sdbor.edu).