



News Release

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Distance Higher Education Offerings Prove Popular

MADISON, S.D. – Public universities in South Dakota saw a 30 percent increase in the number of students enrolling in some type of distance education course in 2007-08, according to a report presented this week to the Board of Regents.

The number of unduplicated students enrolled in a distance-delivered course was 18,815, compared to 14,466 in 2006-07. There were also 26,886 registrations for the various distance education courses offered, an increase of 19 percent over the previous year.

“There is no doubt that the popularity of distance education, especially those courses delivered via the Internet or supported by the Web, has exploded in recent years,” said Regents Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry. “Registrations for distance coursework have been growing 12 to 16 percent each year for the last three to four years.”

Other facts about distance learners found in the annual Electronic University Consortium (EUC) report include:

- The average age is 27, and 54 percent fall within the 17-24 age group.
- Most are female (69 percent), with a majority of males enrolled as undergraduates.
- Internet-based delivery is the most popular, with 65 percent of all distance courses using that method.
- Correspondence courses are declining and account for only 11 percent of the distance-delivered coursework.

The public universities teach 641 different courses, comprising 2,269 course sections, by distance. The five most frequently taught courses by distance are Composition II, South Dakota Indian Studies, College Algebra, Composition I, and Intermediate Algebra.

EUC was created in 2000, with legislative approval, to coordinate the distance education course offerings of all six public universities in South Dakota. Employing an integrated “one-stop” portal and point of contact for statewide distance education, EUC leverages the unique strengths of each public university to better serve students.