



News Release

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Public Universities Grow Graduates by 33 Percent Since 2005

PIERRE, S.D. – The trend of increasing graduate numbers at South Dakota public universities continues, as new data out this week show the total number of students graduating with an associate or bachelor degree at the six public universities increased by 33 percent since 2005.

South Dakota Board of Regents' data show that 4,316 students graduated in the 2012-13 academic year with a bachelor degree, compared with 3,235 in 2004-05. At the associate-degree level, the number of graduates increased from 387 to 485 over the same period. Overall, the increase for both types of degree holders is 33 percent.

“This is a very positive trend, as it remains a top priority for the Board of Regents to retain and graduate more students within the public university system and set them up for successful careers in South Dakota,” said Jack Warner, the regents’ executive director and CEO. “To ensure that our students are on track to graduate in a timely way, student success initiatives are a major focus for all of our institutions,” Warner said.

To begin with, students need to come well prepared for college work, Warner noted. “We work closely with South Dakota high schools to help identify and assist students in need of remediation before they arrive on campus,” he said. Other initiatives under way are enhanced academic advising, specialized math and writing centers, and freshmen success seminars that help ensure college students’ success while they are enrolled.

The baseline year of 2004-05 was established for tracking by the public university system because organizations such as the National Governors Association and Complete College America have projected that, between 2005 and 2025, U.S. higher education institutions must graduate at least 55 percent more students with a postsecondary credential for this country to become competitive economically with other high-performing countries.

The public university system also plans to release its fall 2013 enrollment numbers Tuesday, Sept. 24.