



# News Release

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## More Distance Learners Enrolled at Public Universities

ABERDEEN, S.D. – More than 22,500 students enrolled in a distance education course last year at South Dakota public universities, according to a new report prepared for the South Dakota Board of Regents. While major indicators of headcount, enrollment, and credit hours delivered by distance have been growing, often by large margins, since 2010, the rate of growth has slowed somewhat in recent years, the report said.

An unduplicated headcount of students enrolled in distance courses at the six South Dakota public universities rose 2.6 percent in the last academic year, compared to an 8.5 percent growth rate in 2013 and a 13 percent increase the year before that.

“More students are participating in distance courses than ever before,” said Jack Warner, executive director and CEO for the Board of Regents. “Looking into the data more deeply, our evidence suggests that distance-based students complete courses at rates similar to students who take classes face to face.”

A variety of delivery mechanisms, primarily through the internet and the Digital Dakota Network, are used to bring coursework to place-bound students. Distance education is further supported by off-campus delivery sites at Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Pierre, Watertown, Huron, and Mitchell.

The average distance education student is a 26-year-old female undergraduate from South Dakota enrolled part time. Undergraduate students tend to utilize distance courses as a supplement to other face-to-face courses during the fall and spring semesters, while graduate students were far more likely to enroll exclusively via distance education. The full FY2014 Distance Education Report is available online at [http://www.sdbor.edu/theboard/agenda/2014/October/13\\_BOR1014.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/theboard/agenda/2014/October/13_BOR1014.pdf).

### Distance Student Demographics, FY 2014

<b>Undergraduate</b>	77.1%	<b>Graduate</b>	22.9%
<b>Full Time</b>	37.5%	<b>Part Time</b>	62.5%
<b>Female</b>	62.9%	<b>Male</b>	37.1%
<b>In-state resident</b>	68.9%	<b>Non-Resident</b>	31.1%