



# News Release

Contacts: Jack R. Warner, Executive Director and CEO  
[jack.warner@sdbor.edu](mailto:jack.warner@sdbor.edu)

Janelle Toman, Director of Communications  
[Janelle.toman@sdbor.edu](mailto:Janelle.toman@sdbor.edu)

Telephone: (605) 773-3455

Fax: (605) 773-5320

[www.sdbor.edu](http://www.sdbor.edu)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Wednesday, October 9, 2013

## **Distance Education Continues to Grow**

SPEARFISH, S.D. – Nearly 22,000 students enrolled in a distance education course last year at South Dakota public universities. A new report presented to the South Dakota Board of Regents shows the popularity of distance education continues to grow, although the rate of growth slowed somewhat.

An unduplicated headcount of students enrolled in distance courses rose 8.5 percent in the last academic year, an increase that augments strong five-year gains across the South Dakota system of more than 65 percent. The 8.5 percent growth rate is slightly lower than the 13 percent increase in the previous year.

“Our data over time suggest that enrollment in distance education courses and programs is large, and continues to grow,” said Jack Warner, executive director and CEO for the South Dakota Board of Regents. “Virtually all major performance indicators climbed by large margins, and we had another year of robust expansion in course offerings and enrollments.”

Warner noted that total enrollment, average enrollment, total credit hours, and average credit hours in distance education have all increased each year since 2008-09. 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, Pierre, Rapid City, Watertown, Huron, and Mitchell.

The average distance education student in South Dakota is an undergraduate (75.5 percent), part-time enrolled (69.9 percent), and female (64 percent). A majority of distance-based students are from South Dakota, although out-of-state students have come to represent an increasing share of those being served.

Warner says most undergraduates take distance courses as a supplement to other face-to-face coursework. Graduate students were more likely to enroll exclusively via distance education.

A copy of the full FY2013 Distance Education Report is available online at <http://www.sdbor.edu/theboard/agenda/2013/October/13.pdf>.