



# News Release

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## **Public Universities Move to 120 Credit-Hour Bachelor's Degree**

VERMILLION, S.D. – Beginning next summer, South Dakota's six public universities will move to a 120 credit-hour limit for most bachelor-degree programs and 60 credit hours for associate degrees.

The South Dakota Board of Regents adopted the new credit-hour policies at its regular meeting Wednesday. This effectively reduces a previous standard for baccalaureate degrees by eight credit hours and for associate degrees by four credit hours.

“It is time to revisit the number of hours we require of our students to graduate,” said Jack Warner, the regents' executive director and CEO. “While this change should help some students graduate earlier and with less debt, our highest priority is to maintain the quality and rigor of all academic programs within the system,” Warner said. “South Dakota's current standard of 128 credit hours is higher than in all neighboring states. The 120-hour requirement has worked well for 41 other states and most of the other public university systems. It should allow us to maintain high academic standards while graduating more students,” he said.

Warner said South Dakota is one of only five states with a standard of 128 credit hours for the bachelor's degree and 64 hours for an associate degree. The most common minimum standard across the country is 120 credit hours.

He noted that the new policy adopted this week allows the regents to make exceptions to the 120 credit-hour or 60 credit-hour requirements in cases where an academic program must comply with different standards established by accreditation, licensure, or regulatory bodies. The regents also agreed Wednesday to amend the policy to allow limited discretion to the regents' executive director to adjust credit hour requirements.