



# News Release

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## **SDSU Adds General Studies Degree for ‘Ready Adults’**

PIERRE, S.D. – Students who have been away from college for a while may just need a little extra encouragement to return and finish a degree. The South Dakota public university system’s new bachelor of general studies degree is designed to do just that. And now, that degree will also be offered at South Dakota State University.

Earlier this year, the new degree was approved for delivery at four of the state’s public universities, as well as at off-campus centers and by distance delivery. Now, the state’s largest public university will also offer the degree in what has become a deliberate focus on the “ready adult” population. University officials identified ready adults as those 2,655 students in South Dakota who had completed 90 or more credit hours in the public university system, but stopped out of higher education short of degree completion.

“This degree is aimed specifically at those people, many who are likely candidates for a bachelor’s degree and already have a significant share of their college credits completed,” said Paul Turman, the Board of Regents’ associate vice president for academic affairs.

Turman describes the general studies degree as a “parachute program” intended to provide a lifeline for individuals who fall short of completing degree requirements in other professional fields. “A sizable number of ready adults will come from programs such as teacher education, nursing, pharmacy, and engineering,” Turman explained. If their pathway to degree completion takes a sudden or different turn, many students will find it difficult to transfer into other degree programs without completing another two or three semesters of study, he said.

The bachelor of general studies degree encourages interested students to work directly with a college advisor to select 15 credits from at least three of nine emphasis areas, such as allied health; business; education; fine arts; humanities; social science; science, engineering, and mathematics; industrial technology; or wellness.

Already since June, when the new general studies degree was first authorized, at least 43 students have opted into one of these programs. There are 24 students studying on campus and the other 19 are completing coursework at an off-campus center.