



News Release

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Public Universities Reach Out to Technical School Students

MADISON, S.D. – Programs now available pave the way for technical school students to more easily earn a four-year degree from a South Dakota public university. These are the latest in continuing efforts to improve the pathway for technical school graduates, holding an associate of applied science degree, to pursue four-year degrees at one of the six public universities.

As a result, fall enrollment data this year showed an increase of about 100 students from technical institutes and other institutions transferring into the public university system, for a total of 2,061 transfers. This reverses a recent decline in the number of transfer students coming into the university system.

According to a report delivered this week to the South Dakota Board of Regents, about 100 new or revised program-to-program transfer agreements, called articulation agreements, have been approved between the public universities and the four technical institutes in the last five years. Articulation agreements simplify the transfer process for students and institutions, regents' officials say, by clearly identifying specific credits that apply toward completing a bachelor's degree.

“Our campuses are following through on the goal of providing seamless pathways for students with technical degrees to earn additional credentials beyond the A.A.S. degree,” said Paul Turman, the regents' vice president for academic affairs. “These new articulation agreements and degree program options make it easier for students to earn a bachelor's degree just after graduation from a technical institute, or ready adults who have been in the workforce for a number of years and are seeking opportunities for career advancement.”

In addition to program-specific transfer agreements, many of which have been available since the early 2000s, there are broader transfer opportunities for technical school graduates as well.

The University of South Dakota's new bachelor of science degree in technical leadership allows all technical institute graduates, regardless of their field of study, to earn a bachelor's degree by completing 60 additional credits.

A dual degree program in agriculture, recently launched by South Dakota State University and Lake Area Technical Institute under the Opening Doors Initiative, also significantly simplifies transfer options for associate of applied science graduates.