



News Release

Contacts: Janelle Toman, Director of Communications
janelle.toman@sdbor.edu

Tracy Mercer, Information Research Analyst
tracy.mercer@sdbor.edu

Telephone: (605) 773-3455

Fax: (605) 773-5320

www.sdbor.edu

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Spring 2021 Semester Proceeds as Planned at State Universities

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents today agreed to maintain a spring semester calendar of 77 class days for the six public universities, with the academic term beginning Monday, Jan. 11, 2021, and concluding Friday, May 7, 2021.

University and board officials considered adjusting the spring semester in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but there were mixed reactions to the options presented, said Brian L. Maher, the regents' executive director and CEO. "We looked at proposals to adjust the start and end dates of the semester, as well as whether a spring break period was advisable. We weighed public health considerations and consulted with public health experts," Maher said. "There were pros and cons to all. Absent a clear preference for changing the calendar, we opted to recommend the regents maintain the spring semester schedule as originally adopted."

Spring break for the public universities will be observed March 8-12; no classes or course assignments are scheduled on those dates. In addition, each university will observe official holidays on Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 18) and Presidents' Day (Feb. 15). No classes will be held on Good Friday, which falls next year on April 2.

Maher noted that one clear theme emerged in his discussions with student leaders on campus. "Students wanted their holiday and leave breaks maintained," he said. While students understood the intent when eliminating three holidays from this fall's calendar—to lessen travel to and from campuses during the pandemic—he said students still missed having those scheduled breaks from academic work.