

**South Dakota Board of Regents  
2005 High School to College Transition Report**

**Executive Summary**

- A total of 2,690 of the South Dakota High School Graduating Class of 2005 entered Regental Institutions on a full-time basis in Fall 2005, representing 28.6% of the 9,394 graduates from South Dakota high schools in 2005. This percentage is up slightly from the 28.1% of those graduates enrolled in 2004.
- A total of 239 South Dakota high school graduates entered Regental Institutions on a part-time basis, representing approximately 3% of the 2005 high school graduates.
- The average ACT Composite score of those 2005 SD high school graduates who entered on a full-time basis was 22.5, up slightly from the 2002 and 2003 average of 22.2. For those who entered on a part-time basis, the average ACT Composite score was 20.7, up slightly from the 2004 composite score of 20.4
- Of the 2,690 South Dakota high school graduates entering Regental Institutions in Fall 2005, 874 (35.5%) met the academic performance requirements for Regents Scholars (a 4% overall increase from those meeting the qualifications in 2004 which was 31.3%). Of the 184 high schools with graduates entering Regental Institutions, 130 (71%) had at least one recipient of the Regents Scholar diploma.
- The second cohort of the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship recipients entering the public universities in Fall 2005 was 655 (24.3% of the Spring 05 South Dakota graduates who entered the public universities in Fall 2005). One hundred and forty-four (78%) high schools had at least one graduate receive the SDOS. Also, there were 24 high schools with at least one SDOS recipient, yet they had not been recognized as a Regents Scholar.
- The percentage of SD high school graduates who were awarded credit for College Board Advanced Placement Examinations increased for the fifth year in a row from 5.1% in 2001, to 6.5% in 2002, to 7.3% in 2003, to 7.9% in 2004, to 9.3% in 2005.

Students are placed into remedial English and mathematics courses based on their ACT English and ACT Mathematics scores. Students with ACT English scores below 18 and/or ACT Mathematics scores below 20 are placed into remedial courses. Students may challenge their placement by sitting for the ACT COMPASS placement examinations. Since the analyses in this report is based on the ACT subscores of entering freshmen, the number of students reportedly placed in remedial courses is usually higher than the number of students who enroll in remedial courses because a set of students use the COMPASS exam to demonstrate that they are ready for college-level courses.

Of those SD high school graduates who entered Regental Institutions on a full-time basis in 2005 and completed at least one semester during the 2005-06 academic year, 69.2%

enrolled in college-level English and mathematics courses and 30.8% enrolled in at least one remedial math or English course. This is a slight decrease in the percentage of these full-time graduates who enrolled in remedial courses (down from 34.2% in 2003 and 31.8% in 2004).

- SD high school graduates who entered on a full-time basis in 2005 and enrolled in general education courses had higher average ACT Composite scores (24.2 vs. 18.8) consistent with 2004 (24.3 and 18.8) and had higher first-year university GPAs than graduates who enrolled in remedial courses (2.98 vs. 2.32). Both of these indicators are nearly the same as in 2004.
- Out of the 184 SD high schools with 2005 graduates enrolling in at least one semester at a Regental Institutions during the 2005-06 academic year, 24 (13%) had no students enrolled in remedial coursework.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

### **1. Take the right courses in middle school and high school.**

- Algebra is the *gateway*. School districts should provide and those students prepared should take Algebra I in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade followed by at least four years of higher-level mathematics in high school that includes Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry and Pre-Calculus.
- Preparation for success in college requires completion of rigorous academic courses in high school.
- 2005 South Dakota high school graduates completing a college preparatory curriculum earned average ACT Composite scores of 22.4 compared to 18.8 for those who took less than the college preparatory curriculum. This trend has held for the past eleven years.

### **2. Make cost effective decisions.**

- Remedial courses cost more. In 2006-2007 the tuition and fees for a three-credit college general education course costs \$502. The cost of a three-credit remedial course is \$619.
- Remedial courses extend the amount of time it takes to earn a degree because they do not count towards a degree.
- High School Advanced Placement Courses Save Money. A high school advanced placement course can provide a student with college general education credit for a test fee of \$85, saving the student \$153 in tuition. Additionally, students who entered one of the six Regental Institutions in Fall 2005 were 40% more likely to successfully progress toward graduation during their first year (earning more than 31 credit hours during the fall and spring term).