The legislature established The University of South Dakota as the liberal arts university to meet the needs of the State and region by providing undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, and professional education in business, education, fine arts, law, and medicine, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine. (SDCL 13-57-1)

The Board implemented SDCL 13-57-1 by authorizing undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences and in professional education and by requiring the University to promote excellence in teaching and learning, to support research, scholarly and creative activities, and to provide service to the State of South Dakota, the region, and beyond. The University of South Dakota is the comprehensive university with the South Dakota System of Higher Education.

Curriculum
Degrees are authorized at the associate, baccalaureate, masters, education specialist, and doctoral levels.

The following curriculum is approved for the university:

A. Undergraduate Programs

Associate degree programs in dental hygiene, general studies, and nursing.

Baccalaureate programs in the arts and sciences, business, education, fine arts, health sciences, and medicine.

B. Graduate Programs

Masters degrees in arts and sciences, business, education, fine arts, health sciences, and medicine.

Specialist degrees in education.

Doctoral degrees in arts and sciences, education, law, and medicine.

Professional programs in business, education (including elementary, secondary, and college teaching, counselor education, special education, and school administration), fine arts, health sciences, law, and medicine.