



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual



SUBJECT: Northern State University Mission Statement

NUMBER: 1:10:6

A. PURPOSE

The South Dakota Board of Regents regards the regional universities of South Dakota as valuable contributors to the state's system of higher education. The regional universities serve the educational and programming needs of their geographic region and offer several undergraduate and limited master's-level programs. Faculty emphasis is on teaching, scholarly research and creative activity, and service.

Universities operating within this sector are nationally recognized to promote access to affordable education in a regional location. Northern State University (NSU) focuses on personalized teaching and student services and expands access through its special emphasis on E-Learning. NSU has unique characteristics and is critical in advancing student access, affordability, degree completion, and quality education in South Dakota.

The principles outlined in this policy serve as overarching directions for comprehensive universities reflecting efficient and effective roles in educational programming, professional development, community partnerships, and community engagement.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Board of Regents:** Defined as the constitutional body responsible for governing the Unified System of Public Higher Education in South Dakota, which encompasses its supervision, coordination, management, and regulation. Board of Regents Policy 1:0, 1:1 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.
- 2. Institution:** Defined as one of the six (6) universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and University of South Dakota.
- 3. Statutory Mission:** The institutional mission defined under South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL).
- 4. Carnegie Classification:** A classification given to a university or college. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education provides a framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in the United States.
- 5. Master's Colleges and University:** NSU has a Carnegie Classification of master's colleges and universities-smaller programs. This classification includes institutions that awarded at least 50 master's degrees.

C. NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 1. Main Campus (Aberdeen):** Northern State University's (NSU) main campus located in Aberdeen primarily serves traditional and non-traditional students in the undergraduate and master's programs. This comprehensive regional university offers a unique personalized campus culture with a larger population of part-time students in the undergraduate and master's programs. A sizeable percentage of students are either first-generation, low-income students, or students balancing their education with work and family. The delivery of programs is consistent with both its modern residential setting and expanded emphasis on E-Learning. Academic units include the College of Arts and Sciences and Schools of Business, Education, and Fine Arts.
- 2. Center for Statewide E-Learning (Distance Education):** The Center for Statewide E-Learning, approved by the 2001 legislature, delivers high school courses—including advanced placement courses—to high schools across the state. The center meets critical needs for courses in districts rural areas and those affected by teacher shortages.

D. ACADEMIC CURRICULUM AND CREDENTIALS

NSU is statutorily authorized to offer university academic programs in accordance with SDCL § 13-59.1 in the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers, and a secondary purpose is to offer preprofessional, one-year and two-year terminal and junior college programs. NSU has the authority to credential certificates, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, and master's degrees provided formal approval by the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents may authorize academic programs outside of the statutory mission as identified by the Regents due to workforce needs, strategic needs of the state, etc. All program requests must comply with BOR Policy 2:23 and 2:23:1.

The Center for Statewide E-Learning is authorized to provide high school level curriculum for high school eligible students. High School registrations are accepted according to the South Dakota Department of Education's priority ratings based on districts', sparsity, and size.

E. PARTNERSHIPS COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

Northern State University has several special partnerships with other entities resulting in established Centers or focused outreach efforts, including:

- 1. Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges:** Through membership in the exclusive Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), Northern State University strengthens resources for faculty to provide deep learning and connections across disciplines to prepare students with 21st century critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills that are in high demand across all professions.
- 2. Huron Community Campus:** Dating back to 2010, Northern State University is the only university approved to offer programs and courses at Huron Community Campus. Through a series of MOUs, Northern offers a master's in Teaching and Learning to cohorts of area teachers and a rotation of general education courses that build into associate and bachelor's

degrees. Huron-area students can earn an associate in general studies face-to-face from Northern State University at Huron Community Campus.

- 3. South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI):** The SDSBVI is adjacent to Northern's campus and the university and school partner to provide real-world learning experiences for NSU students to teach visually impaired students. SDSBVI provides valuable input and resources for NSU's special education program and especially its graduate programming.
- 4. Northern Innovation and Startup Center:** The center will infuse technology startup expertise into existing entrepreneurship resources, build a culture of tech entrepreneurship and create cohesive pathways, and offer ideation and incubator programming. In 2021, Land O'Lakes, Inc. and the Center on Rural Innovation announced that Aberdeen would be among its first round of select American Connection Communities. Working with multiple national, regional and local entities, the initiative aims to unlock the potential of broadband access in rural communities, and to bring economic prosperity and high-skilled jobs to reinvigorate rural communities.

F. ROLE WITH SOUTH DAKOTA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- 1. Synergy with Community and Technical Colleges:** The success of regional universities will depend on collaborative work with the regional community and technical colleges. As a regional comprehensive, partnering with the technical colleges is foundational to the mission. Partnerships should include programming, admissions, and advising.
- 2. Synergy with Regental Universities:** As a regional comprehensive, partnering with Regental institutions is essential; therefore, NSU will build strong program partnerships with the other five public universities. Program to Program agreements, collaboration with faculty and programming should be central to the mission of the regional comprehensive university.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR March 1991; BOR May 1994; BOR May 1996; BOR March 2001; BOR December 2003; BOR October 2019; BOR October 2022.