

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Assessment

NUMBER: 2:11

A. PURPOSE

This policy identifies the responsibility of each university to assess student learning within its academic programs. Assessment of student learning enhances the overall quality of academic and co-curricular programs. University assessment programs increase communication within and between departments/units related to departmental, college and institutional goals and objectives. Assessment also enhances public understanding of higher education and diversity of institutional roles and missions.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Academic Program:** The degree, major, and as applicable the specialization approved by the Board of Regents for the degree-granting institution.
- 2. Assessment:** A systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.
- 3. Institutional Accreditor:** The six public universities are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

C. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.** Assessment is a necessary and integral component of continuous improvement for academic programs.
- 2.** Information gained from assessment should be used to improve student outcomes.
- 3.** Assessment of student outcomes may include authentic student work, student performances, nationally normed tests, licensure exams, surveys, observations, placement rates and other measures as determined by the academic department and university.
- 4.** The Board shall remain apprised of students' learning outcomes and each university's efforts to improve student learning outcomes.
- 5.** Assessment for continuous improvement should not be used to make comparisons among Regental universities, as the curriculum, assessment plans, measurement instruments, ratings, resources, faculty, students, and missions are different for each university.

D. ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. System Assessment Committee

Each university shall appoint at least one representative to the SDBOR System Assessment Committee. The Committee shall:

- 1.1. Advise the Academic Affairs Council on matters related to assessment, including policy and guidelines designed to ensure that assessment requirements and activities are clear, efficient, and effective;
- 1.2. Communicate and coordinate with the System General Education Committee to advance system initiatives pertaining to assessment.

2. University Assessment of Academic Programs

Each university shall have in place a functioning assessment structure and processes which conform to the accreditation requirements of the institutional accreditor and any specialty accreditations or approvals maintained by programs or units at the university. At a minimum each institution's assessment structure and processes shall:

- 2.1. Assess and analyze student achievement of the goals and learning outcomes of the established SDBOR System General Education Requirements. Each university will submit a report of their assessment findings annually to the Board at its December meeting. AAC Guidelines outline the required components of the report.
- 2.2. Support institutional Program Review or Specialty Accreditation for each academic program/department. All academic programs will be reviewed on a 6-year cycle unless their specialized accreditation requires a different timeline. The university President or Chief Academic Officer may require a shorter review interval or grant an extension of no longer than two (2) years.
- 2.3. Include program-level (undergraduate, graduate and co-curricular) assessment plans and processes. Undergraduate program level assessment plans will include methods of assessment for Cross-Curricular Skill Requirements per Academic Affairs Guidelines.
- 2.4. Include other required elements of the university assessment program as identified by individual institutions.
- 2.5. Incorporate the results of assessment and evaluation processes into the regular review of curriculum, co-curricular programs and related policies and procedures.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 1984; BOR April 1987; BOR June 1987; BOR June 1992; BOR March 2005; BOR August 2016; BOR August 2022.