

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Academic and Student Affairs**  
**Consent**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4 – Z**  
**DATE: April 1, 2020**

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**SUBJECT**

**SDSU HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation**

**CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

[SDCL § 13-49-27.1](#) – Nonaccredited institutions prohibited from offering postsecondary education credit or degree

[BOR Bylaws, Section 3.1.1](#) – Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

[BOR Policy 1:10](#) – Relationship of Curriculum and Instruction to Statutory Objectives

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

The attached letter recognizes the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) granting continued accreditation to South Dakota State University with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2029-30.

Public institutions under the control of the South Dakota Board of Regents obtain institutional and programmatic accreditation to ensure standards of excellence in areas such as faculty, curriculum, administration, and student services. Regional accreditation is the educational accreditation of schools, colleges, and universities in the United States by one of seven regional accrediting agencies. Accreditation is a voluntary process by which colleges demonstrate to each other, and sometimes to employers and licensing agencies, that their credits and degrees meet minimum standards. Institutions in the Regental system obtain accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) which requires a comprehensive self-study every ten years to maintain accreditation. Those institutions that fail to meet expectations for HLC are placed on probation and are confronted with a potential loss of Regional accreditation if the appropriate interim action is not taken. Regional accreditation is a necessary requirement to ensure access to Federal funds.

**IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Completing reaccreditation is a time consuming task involving the entire campus community. Campus staff are required to submit self-studies as well as meet with HLC review teams to ensure compliance with five criteria:

1. Mission
2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

(Continued)

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**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement
5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

SDSU's review resulted in a finding by the HLC Institutional Actions Council that they met every core component and the five Criteria for Accreditation with no sanctions, no internal monitoring required, and eligibility to choose its accreditation pathway going forward. HLC's final report concluded by saying "The team's recommendation that South Dakota State University be eligible to choose its pathway is based on the enthusiasm of the faculty, staff and students for the mission of the university; the institution's commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service; and, strong evidence of good fiscal management. SDSU is well-poised to continue to serve the state, region, and nation well."

Administration from SDSU will provide a brief overview of the outcomes from the work undertaken during the reaccreditation process.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment I – SDSU HLC Notice of Accreditation



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Chicago, IL 60604-1411  
312.263.0456 | 800.621.7440  
Fax: 312.263.7462 | hlcommission.org

January 31, 2020

Dr. Barry Dunn  
President  
South Dakota State University  
Morrill Hall 222  
Box 2201  
Brookings, SD 57007

Dear President Dunn:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning South Dakota State University by the Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission at its meeting on January 27, 2020. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with HLC.

**Action.** IAC continued the accreditation of South Dakota State University with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2029-30.

In taking this action, the IAC considered materials from the most recent evaluation and the institutional response (if applicable) to the evaluation findings.

In two weeks, this action will be added to the *Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report*, a resource for Accreditation Liaison Officers to review and manage information regarding the institution's accreditation relationship. Accreditation Liaison Officers may request the ISR Report on HLC's website at <https://www.hlcommission.org/isr-request>.

Within the next 30 days, HLC will also publish information about this action on its website at <https://www.hlcommission.org/Student-Resources/recent-actions.html>.

Please note: Revisions to HLC's Criteria for Accreditation will go into effect on September 1, 2020. Institutions will be evaluated against the revised Criteria for all reviews conducted after that date, including reviews related to previously assigned monitoring. Institutional reports submitted after September 1, 2020, that reference the Criteria should be written to the revised version. More information about the revised Criteria, including a crosswalk between the current and revised versions, is available on HLC's website at <https://www.hlcommission.org/criteria>.

If you have any questions about these documents after viewing them, please contact the institution's staff liaison Steph Brzuzy. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gellman-Danley  
President

CC: ALO