

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Academic and Student Affairs**

**AGENDA ITEM: 6 – D (3)**

**DATE: October 6-7, 2021**

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**SUBJECT**

**Senate Bill 55 Task Force Recommended Policy Revisions:  
BOR Policy 2:35 – Course Enrollment Management (New Policy) (First Reading)**

**CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

[BOR Policy 1:0](#) – South Dakota Unified System of Higher Education  
[BOR Policy 5:17](#) – Instructional Funding [Section 4]  
[AAC Guideline 5.7](#) – Section Size Administration Guidelines

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

**History:**

The Senate Bill 55 Task Force (SB55<sup>1</sup>) was created to review the following:

1. The possible combining of administration at all levels of operation within an institution;
2. The possible combining of operations and functions across multiple institutions;
3. The possible combining of the administration of programs across multiple institutions;
4. A review of the duplication of program offerings;
5. A review of the academic majors with low enrollments and low numbers of graduates;
6. A review of functions outside the core missions of teaching, learning, and research;
7. A review of the operations and functions provided as an efficiency through the central office of the Board of Regents;
8. A review of the viability of the university centers; and
9. Any other possible cost-effective measures the task force determines are worthy of examination.

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<sup>1</sup> SD Legislature, 2020 Senate Bill 55, <https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bill/11827/69874>, Retrieved August 31, 2021.

(Continued)

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**DRAFT MOTION 20211006\_6-D(3):**

I move to approve the first reading of the proposed new BOR Policy 2:35, as presented.

The task force was separated into three subcommittees: Academic, Administration and Infrastructure. The SB55 Academic Subcommittee was charged with reviewing Program Review, Duplication of Programs, and Course Enrollment. This subcommittee began its work in October of 2020 and finalized its recommendations at the June 2021 Task Force meeting held in Brookings, South Dakota.

### **SB55 Task Force Recommendations:**

The recommendations from the task force were provided to academic leadership (AAC), finance and administration leadership (BAC), Council of Presidents (COPS), and various other stakeholders throughout the Regental system. The Board of Regents reviewed the recommendations at its August Retreat.

The SB55 Academic Subcommittee arrived at its common recommendations after review of several articles, research on best practices, and evaluation of data within the Regental system. One of its recommendations, which was incorporated into the full task force report, focuses low enrolled section/section size. This recommendation is outlined below:

1. Eliminate “instructional method” references from system policies and related instructional method exceptions to minimum course section enrollment policies.
2. Place the responsibility for managing compliance with minimum course section enrollment policies on the institutions and establish incentives for compliance.
3. Establish policies allowing a maximum of eighteen (18) percent of an institution’s course sections to have enrollments below the minimum enrollment requirements.
4. Standardize the process for institutions creating new course sections where individual instruction is a component (i.e., some institutions combine all such students into one course section while others enroll each student in a separate course section). This will result in more accurate tracking of policy compliance.
5. Establish a process to document allowances for a limited number of low enrolled sections when required to ensure students have access to coursework required for degree completion.
6. Establish policies governing low enrolled course sections offered during summer or non-standard academic terms that ensure financial viability for institutions offering the course.

### **Outcome:**

The Board of Regents academic staff in cooperation with the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) developed a new BOR Policy 2:35 shown in Attachment I. The revisions were drafted while considering other Regental policies, academic policies, and various research tools.

The proposed policy (see Attachment I) includes the following sections:

- Purpose: This is a preamble to the policy outlining the new criteria outlined by the SB55 committee. (Page 5)
- Definitions: Definitions have been inserted to further clarify the intent of this policy. (Pages 5-6)
- Policy Statements: The statements represent the objectives and expectations of the policy. (Pages 6-7)
- Course Enrollment Management: This section of the policy aims to clarify overall enrollment policy requirements for Undergraduate (Fall/Spring Term), Graduate (Fall/Spring), and Summer Term. The goal of this policy is to clarify a threshold for which a minimum percentage of enrollments in section size that will be allowed per level (UG/GR, including Law/Medical). (Pages 7-8)
  - Undergraduate section threshold will be 18% (i.e., no more than 18% of the total sections can fall below 10 students enrolled).
  - Lower division graduate threshold will be 25% (i.e., no more than 25% of the total sections can fall below 7 students enrolled).
  - Upper division graduate threshold will be 50% for regional comprehensive and 75% for specialty and research-intensive campuses (i.e., no more than 50/75% of the total sections can fall below 4 students enrolled).
- Course Section Management: This section of the policy aims to clarify overall section management processes. (Pages 8-9)
- Summer Academic Term: This section provides direction on the funding mechanism for the Summer Academic Term. (Page 9)
- Reporting Management: This section provides reporting guidelines. (Pages 9-10)
- Non-Compliance: This section provides the policy guidelines on non-compliance. (Page 10)

## **IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Academic programming and curricular offerings are essential aspects of that which the Board of Regents governs. The newly attached BOR Policy is designed to respond to enrollment management including low enrolled sections. The need to manage section size includes the need to manage enrollment overall, including section enrollment, course/section rotation, and academic class capacity.

The changes to this policy require changes to existing BOR Policies 2:21 and 5:17, and these will be addressed in meeting agenda items 6-(4) and 6-(5). Essentially, though, this policy as shown in Attachment I will replace both policies. The objective to streamline one policy will be to ensure that course enrollment is monitored by understanding section size, scheduling or rotation of sections, academic class capacity, and canceling of sections. All course enrollment methodologies are tightly coupled academic functions. Maximizing the strategies necessary for advising and continual enrollment management will mark success for the campus.

The timeline for the activity related to this draft policy, guidelines, forms, communication, and technology platform is as follows:

- Draft BOR Policy 2:35 First Reading – October 2021 BOR Meeting
- Campus Communication – October/November 2021
- AAC Revisions – November 2021
- Draft BOR Policy 2:35 Tentative Second and Final Reading – December 2021 BOR Meeting
- AAC Guideline Revisions – December 2021
- Metrics – Data Analytics – December 2021
- Pilot Go-Live – Spring and Fall 2022
- Reporting on Pilot Board of Regents – December 2022

The timeline associated with this policy is dependent on communications between the October BOR meeting and the December BOR meeting. The target will be to present the second and final reading of the policy at the December BOR meeting; however, if additional time is warranted to ensure the policy is reflective of best practice, the final may be delivered at the March BOR meeting.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment I – Draft of New BOR Policy 2:35

## SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

### Policy Manual

**SUBJECT:** Course Enrollment Management Policy

**NUMBER:** 2:35

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#### A. PURPOSE

The University system plans course scheduling according to projected enrollment and seeks to optimize faculty resources throughout the course offerings. The Course Enrollment Management Policy serves to provide direction with respect to the course schedule. Courses should be scheduled to ensure maximum enrollment and student accessibility. Course enrollment looks to coordinate section size by understanding class capacity, section enrollment and the course rotation scheduling.

This policy applies to all courses and academic units during the academic year (fall/spring and summer). Each university while managing section size should take into consideration careful planning, informed by enrollment histories and course rotations.

#### B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Census Enrollment:** The number of students enrolled as of the census date within the academic calendar.
2. **Census Enrollment Reporting Date:** The date identified for reporting to the Board of Regents as outlined in [BOR Policy 2:24](#).
3. **Classroom Capacity:** The maximum physical seating capacity a section may need due to academic quality, academic activity and needs of the section.
4. **Collaborative Sections:** Where two or more sections exist and are at more than one campus. Students enroll at their home campus section and the section is combined with another host campus (i.e., DSU Home Campus and SDSU Host Campus collaborating across sections).
5. **Course:** A course has a unique subject and course number which can be a common system course or unique university course (e.g., ENGL 101 [Subject English, Number 101]).
6. **Cross-Listed Sections:** Where two or more course sections exist for student registration; yet, the sections are taught as one by the same instructor.
7. **Home Campus:** A student's primary campus based on their program of study and admissions to the campus.
8. **Host Campus:** A campus that a student could attend secondarily to their home campus for courses not taught by the home campus.

**Commented [MJK1]:** This policy reflects the work on SB55 as it relates to Low Enrolled Sections. This policy encompasses: Course Rotation, Maximum Capacity and Course Enrollments.

SB55 Recommendation:  
This policy looks now at every section within the higher education system. There are no instructional methods for which can be exempted.

SB55  
i)eliminate the instructional type of methodology from guidelines  
ii)remove rules and exceptions, moving the responsibility to manage to the campus;  
iii)document an allowance or methodology for retention of low enrolled sections;

9. **Multi-Section Courses:** Where many sections of a course exist at different times, locations, and instructional methods (i.e., English 101 CRN 82139 Face-to-Face, 82140 Online, and 82141 Hybrid).
10. **Reduced Capacity:** When a classroom has a reduced capacity due to outside variables (e.g., pandemic).
11. **Section:** A specific offering of a course in a term which is assigned into one or more sections. The section has a unique number assigned that denotes the day, time, location, and instructor teaching the course (e.g., ENGL 101 CRN 82139, MWF 9:00-9:50 AM, Building Administration Room 100). This section is available and viewable for registration by students.
12. **Section Enrollment:** The number of students enrolled in a section.
13. **Section Rotation:** The planned schedule outlining when course selections will be offered to students. Not all courses are delivered every term and may be scheduled as needed. Typically, the section rotation ensuring students graduate within the expected timeframe to the degree they are seeking (e.g., four-year, two-year, etc.).
14. **Section Enrollment Grouping:** A group of sections categorized by enrollment size.
15. **Student Credit Hours (SCH):** The number of enrolled students multiplied by the credit hours per section.

### C. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Board of Regents Policy 1:0, 1:1 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.
2. The Board of Regents governs the policy for Course Enrollment Management.
3. The university manages the process on course enrollment management.
4. This policy applies to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional courses that are assigned workload during the fall and spring semesters.
5. The summer academic term will be managed separately by the university with a financial model to ensure financial health. This model will be provided to the Board of Regents Academic staff.
6. The Board of Regents will manage the reporting tool and data metrics for the universities.
7. Managing enrollment includes the addition of course sections, cancelation of course sections, course rotation scheduling, and classroom capacity by the university.
8. The Board of Regents will establish section size grouping for which the university must manage section enrollment and report section enrollment.
  - Undergraduate Section Size Grouping include (Course Numbers 0-499): 1, 2-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-99, and 99+.
  - Lower Division Graduate Section Size Grouping (Course Numbers 500-699) include: 1, 2-6, 7-12, 13-19, 20-39, and 40+.

- Upper Division Graduate Section Size Grouping (Course Numbers 700+) include: 1, 2-3, 4-7, 8-15, 16-39, and 40+.
9. There will be no section exceptions to the enrollment management policy.
  10. The university will review their section enrollment data and section offerings to remain within the thresholds identified in BOR Policy 2:35 Section D.

**D. COURSE SECTION ENROLLMENT**

**1. Undergraduate Fall/Spring Academic Term Section Enrollment**

The undergraduate groupings include various section sizes. The policy of the Board of Regents requires that the total percentage of sections for course enrollments of less than 10 (groups 1, 2-9) must remain at or less than 18% of total sections for that university.

Section Enrollment Grouping

• Enrollment 1 Student	
• Enrollment 2-9 Students	*Maximum of 18% of all Sections
• Enrollment 10-19 Students	
• Enrollment 20-29 Students	
• Enrollment 30-39 Students	
• Enrollment 40-49 Students	
• Enrollment 50-99 Students	
• Enrollment greater than 99 Students	*Minimum of 82% of all Sections

**Commented [MJK2]:** A review was conducted over the last five years and on average 20% was found as the constant variable. SB55 committee recommends going to 18% to show efficiency goal.

**2. Graduate Fall/Spring Academic Term Section Enrollment**

The graduate groupings include various section sizes based upon lower and upper division course work.

2.1. Lower Division Graduate Courses (500-699):

The total percentage of sections for course enrollments of less than 7 (1, 2-6) must remain at or less than 25% of total sections for that university.

Section Enrollment Grouping

• Enrollment 1 Student	
• Enrollment 2-6 Students	*Maximum of 25% of all Sections
• Enrollment 7-12 Students	
• Enrollment 13-19 Students	
• Enrollment 20-39 Students	
• Enrollment greater than 40 Students	*Minimum of 75% of all Sections

**Commented [MJK3]:** A review was conducted over the last five years and on average 20% was found as the constant variable.

## 2.2. Upper Division Graduate Courses (700+):

### 2.2.1 Regional Institutions:

The total percentage of sections for course enrollments that are less than four (4) must remain at or less than 50% of total sections for that university.

### 2.2.2 Specialty Institutions:

The total percentage of sections for course enrollments that are less than four (4) must remain at or less than 75% of total sections for that university.

### 2.2.3 Research Institutions:

The total percentage of sections for course enrollments that are less than four (4) must remain at or less than 75% of total sections for that university.

## E. COURSE SECTION MANAGEMENT

To manage this policy, university academic leadership should evaluate the distribution of sections by size with the distribution of students. There may be a need to evaluate section needs and growth or reduction of sections.

Special attention should be focused on sections, student generated hours, trends within the term or over terms, as well as the rotation scheduling. There may be a need to collaborate within the university or within the system to reduce low-enrolled sections or increase access to sections.

See AAC Guideline 5.7 for additional guidance.

### 1. Adding Sections

It may be critical to add additional sections based on enrollment in the program(s). The university should review enrollment trends and the section rotation to determine the need to add sections.

### 2. Canceling Sections

Universities may need to cancel sections in order to adhere to enrollment percentages identified in section BOR Policy 2:35 Section D (Course Section Enrollment). The key to course enrollment management at the university will be to determine which low enrollment courses to retain to ensure students are able to graduate on time.

In addition to cancelation, the university should work with other host campuses to collaborate and collapse low enrolled sections. Care should be taken to ensure students can enroll in alternative sections.

### 3. Section Capacity Management

Universities should evaluate their section and classroom capacity to determine if the sections/rooms are appropriately scheduled for the academic need. The course enrollment management report should be utilized during the term to review and at the end of each academic Fall/Spring. Trends can be reviewed to determine if updating section and enrollment capacity will assist in normalizing section enrollments.

**Commented [MJK4]:** SB55 Recommendation on System Course Collaboration if we need to cancel a section.

**Commented [MJK5]:** Will be in the Reporting Tool



#### 4. Section Rotation Scheduling

Universities should evaluate their section rotation to determine if the sections are appropriately scheduled. Typically, courses/sections are scheduled to meet the expected timeframe to complete the program of study. The section rotation reporting should be utilized to determine if updating the section rotation will assist in normalizing section enrollments.

**Commented [MJK6]:** Will be in the Reporting Tool

#### 5. Section Monitoring

Academic leadership should monitor enrollment trends to determine if any sections are canceled repeatedly. If such sections are identified, academic leadership should work with the academic programs to reduce the frequency with which those courses are offered, to modify or suspend programs where this is chronic low enrollment, and/or to reduce the number of sections offered to match the demand more accurately for the course.

Enrollment patterns in all programs will be periodically reviewed by the Provost's Office as part of ongoing program review procedures. A program that finds it necessary to regularly schedule and offer low enrollment courses may have insufficient demand for the program.

**Commented [MJK7]:** Will be in the Reporting Tool

### F. SUMMER ACADEMIC TERM

This policy applies to all students taking courses during the summer academic term. Summer shall be separate and distinct from fall and spring because of the funding nature. Therefore, each university will manage their summer term to ensure the section offerings meet the university guidelines. Universities will review their section enrollment data and section offerings to reduce sections that do not meet the thresholds identified by the university. AAC Guideline 5.7 provides additional information on summer term.

### G. REPORTING MANAGEMENT

#### 1. Reporting/Dashboard Solution

An online dashboard will be provided for each university managed by the Board of Regents.

This dashboard will provide a view of live section enrollment across the entire term by section enrollment grouping. The grouping will include all sections, with no exceptions. Cross-listed sections will be incorporated into the group with the combined enrollments.

Universities will be able to evaluate the following:

- Sections by section enrollment grouping
- Enrollments
- Generated student credit hours (SCH)
- Maximum capacity
- Average section size

**Commented [MJK8]:** A tableau view will be used by the campuses to monitor their sections.

BOR will manage the data and the view will be provided to the academic leadership at the campuses.

Trend data shall be available from prior academic terms and or academic years (fall/spring). Summer will be excluded from reporting in the academic year.

See AAC Guideline 5.7 for additional guidance.

**2. Annual Reporting**

An annual report shall be provided to the Board of Regents at their June BOR meeting by BOR Academic Staff. This report will provide a summary of the enrollment trends for the academic year (fall/spring) and outline success of meeting the thresholds identified in BOR Policy 2:35 Section D.

**H. NON-COMPLIANCE**

Universities out of compliance with this policy will not receive approval for future new academic program proposals under BOR Policy 2:23 until compliance is attained. See AAC Guideline for additional guidance on policy (AAC Guideline 5.7).

**FORMS / APPENDICES:**

None

**SOURCE:**

BOR <Month> 2021.