

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Planning Session

AGENDA ITEM: 4 – F
DATE: August 2-4, 2022

SUBJECT

Senate Bill 55 – Academic Program Duplication Review

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[SB55 Taskforce Report and Recommendations](#)
[BOR Policy 2:23](#) – New Programs, Program Modification, Curricular Requests, and Inactivation/Termination

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

In [October 2021](#), the Regents approved the final Senate Bill 55 (SB55) report. Recommendation 34, Utilize a Data-driven Program Demand Gap Analysis to Inform Decisions on Necessary/Unnecessary Academic Program Duplication, encourages the Board of Regents to consider utilizing information on gap analysis to ensure approved programming meets the statutory mission of the university, state workforce need, or other strategic-driven need.

Over the past several months, the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) have been addressing this topic. Specifically, AAC has been addressing workforce needs, support to document needs and understanding when a program becomes ubiquitous, requiring necessary duplication. AAC requested additional confirmation from the Board regarding their desire on implementing the recommendation from the SB55 Taskforce Report and Recommendation.

Excerpt from the report ([pages 55-56](#))¹:

The Task Force recommends that the Board of Regents use the data provided in a program demand gap analysis to inform decisions on academic program duplication within the system (i.e., academic programs offered at more than one institution). Duplication of programs within the system is not currently a rampant problem; about 75 percent of undergraduate and graduate majors in the university system are available at a single institution. Where program duplication does exist, it is not always a negative – the challenge to the Board of Regents is to determine when program duplication is necessary and when it is unnecessary. One significant

¹ SDBOR (October 2022): SDBOR BOR Meeting Item 3-1: Final Senate Bill 55 Task Force Report and Recommendations. Retrieved from [https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014Agendaitems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/3 | BOR1021.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014Agendaitems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/3%20BOR1021.pdf).

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INFORMATIONAL ITEM

measure in determining whether program duplication is necessary or unnecessary is recognition of the university system's role in supplying an educated workforce to South Dakota's businesses and industries. The Task Force commissioned Emsi, a private labor market analytics firm, to complete an academic program demand gap analysis to determine the current alignment of major fields of study with the state's workforce needs. The Emsi analysis provides a starting point for data-driven decisions when proposals for duplicative academic programs come forward. To further guide the use of the Emsi program demand gap analysis, the Task Force further recommends:

1. Using the information provided in the academic program demand gap analysis as a central variable in decisions on proposals for new academic programs that are potentially duplicative within the university system.
2. Identifying high demand occupations and related academic fields that may require expansion or development to meet anticipated workforce needs.
3. Reviewing academic programs where public universities produce a surplus of graduates relative to state workforce demand. However, the Task Force cautions that not all such academic programs require termination or reduction. In some cases, graduates in high demand fields compete in regional or national labor markets and may choose employment outside of South Dakota, creating state workforce shortages despite universities producing an adequate number of graduates. In such situations, it is imperative that the public universities produce more graduates in a field than labor projections indicate are necessary. It is also important for the Board of Regents to work with state and regional workforce and/or economic development organizations to identify businesses and industries that need graduates from the university system.
4. Updating the information in the Emsi analysis on a regular basis. The Emsi analysis looks at a specific point in time, therefore has a limited timeframe for reliability. Labor and workforce markets can change quickly, especially as technology makes some occupations obsolete and creates new ones. The Board of Regents should update this analysis every three to five years to ensure academic program offerings continue to align with workforce and student demand.
5. Sharing the program demand gap analysis with other stakeholders to aid in promoting workforce development within the state. This includes the state legislature, state agencies, Governor's Office of Economic Development, and regional workforce organizations. Moreover, the Board of Regents should consider partnership with the state technical colleges on future editions of the program demand gap analysis to produce an integrated and comprehensive view of public higher education's relationship to the state workforce.

After the task force recommendation, Dr. Minder along with AAC, supported and submitted new policies on program requests. The Board approved in their March 2022

BOR Policy 2:23 (Section C, 8, page 3)² highlighting the following statement:

The Board of Regents discourages duplication of programs except in cases where regional or state workforce demand provides strong rationale for additional offerings. The university requesting the program must provide justification within the full proposal. The Regents may not approve given the duplication of programming.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

Department of Labor and Regulation³ identify high demand occupations on their website. When reviewing the top 30 requiring some form of post-secondary education, a partial list includes Accountants and Auditors, Child, Family, and School Social Workers, Elementary School Teachers, Management Analysts, Registered Nurses, Secondary School Teachers, and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors. This list is not all-inclusive. In addition, Emsi⁴ supports several of the listed as workforce needs for South Dakota.

System academic staff, working with Dr. Maher, would like the Board to provide direction specific to academic program duplication. If program duplication is supported due to state needs, strategic mission, or other, general guidelines for BOR discussion might include the following:

1. Consider university mission and how it supports program growth.
2. Documentation required using DLR and Emsi to support workforce needs.
3. Support from state-wide agencies and or other associations supporting the workforce shortage.
4. University to document competitor peers that have similar programs supporting the addition to that regional location.
5. University to support why the program justifies duplication especially if other like-programs exist that are not at full capacity. Full capacity should only be considered for on-campus programs. Fully online programs have no capacity limitation. Online programs must manage their programs by section capacity at that university with BOR Policy 2:35.
6. Student demand in the regional main campus location.
7. The Program Request form must show the responses to this information for the Regents.
8. The Executive Director will make a recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

None

² SDBOR (2022). SDBOR Policy 2:23. Retrieved from https://www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-23_Effective-08.01.2022.pdf.

³ DLR (2022). South Dakota Hot Careers: High Demand, High Wage Occupations. Retrieved from https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/hot_careers_data.aspx.

⁴ SDBOR (2021). Commissioned a Workforce and Degree Analysis Study by Emsi.