

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 7 – A
DATE: August 2-4, 2022

SUBJECT

Proposed BOR Policy 2:XX – Accreditation (First Reading)

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 1:1](#) – General Authority, Powers, and Purpose of the Board

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Institutional accreditation is required to ensure a university is eligible to receive federal funding and award federal financial aid to its students. It is also a hallmark of academic and institutional quality, integrity, and financial responsibility. Similarly, program accreditation assures stakeholders of the quality and rigor of an academic program, and graduation from an accredited program is required for licensure by some licensing boards.

Each SDBOR university is responsible for maintaining its own institutional accreditation and may seek program accreditation with approval from the Board of Regents. As the governing board for all six universities, the Board of Regents has a role and responsibility in accreditation efforts and a responsibility to oversee the activities of the universities. Currently, there is no policy that explicitly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Board or the universities pertaining to accreditation.

At the February 2022 AAC meeting, System Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Janice Minder, tasked Dr. Rebecca Hoey and the Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs) with drafting a new policy on institutional and program accreditation. The group reviewed policies from all SHEEO agencies and identified accreditation policies in the Alaska, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota and Wisconsin systems. The policies were studied for commonalities and for policy language particularly appropriate to the South Dakota Board of Regents. From that research, the group drafted a proposed policy governing accreditation for the SDBOR (Attachment I).

Accreditation Liaison Officers:
BHSU – Dr. Pam Cariveau
DSU – Dr. Jeanette McGreevy

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20220802_7-A:

I move to approve the first reading of the new proposed BOR Policy on accreditation, as presented.

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NSU – Dr. Erin Fouberg

SDSMT – Dr. Darcy Briggs

SDSU – Dr. Teresa Seefeldt

USD – Dr. Lisa Bonneau

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

The accreditation officers provided their recommendation and proposed draft policy to the Academic Affairs Council. The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) has reviewed and provided support for the attached policy. This policy outlines governance by the Board of Regents and documents the required reporting on accreditation to the BOR academic staff.

The timeline for this policy will be as follows:

- First Reading – August 2022 BOR Meeting
- Second and Final Reading – October 2022 BOR Meeting

Board academic staff recommends approval.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – BOR Policy 2.XX Accreditation (Draft)

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Accreditation

NUMBER: 2:XX

A. PURPOSE

To establish accreditation responsibilities for the Board of Regents and Regental Institutions. Accreditors establish and measure stringent criteria on academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and responsible conduct. An institution's accreditation status informs stakeholders of the legitimacy of higher education institutions and programs. The federal government requires that higher education institutions be accredited to be eligible for federal funding and to provide students with federal financial aid.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Academic Program:** Undergraduate (associate or bachelor) and graduate/professional (master, specialist, doctorate) degrees approved and offered at each of the Regental institutions.
2. **Accredited Institution:** Holding accreditation from one of the following institutional accrediting bodies, unless otherwise specified: Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (NACS), WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).
3. **Program Accreditation:** Holding accreditation from a specialized accrediting organization for a specific academic program that leads to a profession.

C. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. 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 will each, based on its own merits and the quality of its programs, retain individual institutional accreditation.
2. An institution may, with approval from the Board of Regents, seek program accreditation for an academic program. (BOR Policy 1:10)
3. Program accreditation may be necessary when the program prepares students for licensure, where the licensing agency requires applicants graduate from a program with specific program accreditation.

4. Program accreditation is voluntary, though strongly encouraged, when it is appropriate, aligned with the mission of the university, and lends credibility to the program, university, and graduates.
5. As the governing body, pursuant to South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL) § 13-49 through § 13-53, the Board of Regents will comply with the requirements for governing boards set forth by the universities' institutional accreditor.

D. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES AND REPORTING

1. The Board of Regents and the Executive Director or designee will participate in accreditation visits as directed by the accreditation organization or requested by the institution.
2. The institution will report the status of institutional and programmatic accreditation by August 1 annually to the Board Academic Affairs office. The report should identify the following for institutional and each programmatic accreditation:
 - 2.1. Name of accreditation agency
 - 2.2. For each programmatic accreditation agency, the program CIP codes
 - 2.3. Frequency of accreditation
 - 2.4. Year of last accreditation decision
 - 2.5. Status of accreditation (i.e., initial, continuing, probation)
 - 2.6. Next scheduled accreditation visit
3. The Board Academic Affairs office will compile an Accreditation Status Report to be provided to the Board of Regents at their October meeting.
4. Institutions will provide to the Board of Regents a copy of the accreditation status letter received from its institutional accreditor following a reaccreditation cycle.
5. Institutions will provide to the Board of Regents a copy of any accreditation status letter or notification of accreditation status pertaining to programmatic accreditation with the submission of its comprehensive program review report.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR October 2022.