

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 8 – A (1)

DATE: March 29-30, 2022

SUBJECT

Revision to BOR Policy 2:1 – Move to BOR Policy 2:23:1

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

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

[BOR Policy 1:2](#) – System Mission Statement

[BOR Policy 2:23](#) – Program and Curriculum Process

[BOR Policy 2:1](#) – External Review of Proposed Graduate Programs

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

After evaluating BOR Policy 2:23 regarding the process for new program requests, the BOR academic staff determined that enhancing BOR Policy 2:1 (External Review of Proposed Graduate Programs) was the appropriate next step as it connects directly to BOR Policy 2:23. A summary of proposed changes is found below. Due to the direct connection of these two policies, staff also recommend reassigning a new policy number to 2:1. They recommend relabeling it 2:23:1; thus, placing the two related policies next to one another for ease of reference.

The summary of changes to current BOR policy 2:1 include:

1. Purpose: Connecting the external review to the curricula planning policy. (Page 3)
2. Definitions: Incorporating some of the common definitions from the current policy and from the Policy 2:23. (Page 3)
3. Guidelines: Narrative on the purpose of the policy. (Page 4)
4. Process and Timeline: This section will attempt to identify the provisions of the policy for the expectation related to an external review and the appropriate stakeholders (Pages 4-5)
5. Waiving External Reviews: This section covers the external review waiver process and expectations. (Page 5)
6. New – Moving to one external review for all graduate programs. (Page 5-6)

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20220329_8-A(1):

I move to approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BOR Policy 2:1, as presented.

The most substantive change to this policy can be found on pages 5-6 under Section E (Waiving the External Review). The proposed policy reflects the reasons a university may request a waiver. For example, a waiver may be requested due to an external site visit by an accreditor. If that waiver is granted, the expectation is that the final report from the site visit will be submitted to the Regents following its receipt. This will then close the loop for those new programs that have a waiver due to an external review process through the accreditation.

A few other changes to this policy include updating the language of staff positions, allowing the campus to select a minimum of one external reviewer (but may add additional external reviewers as needed), and to allow an external review to be conducted virtually.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

The timeline associated with this policy revision will be:

- First Reading – March 2022 BOR Meeting
- Second and Final Reading – June 2022 BOR Meeting
- Guideline Revisions – August 2022

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – Proposed Revisions to BOR Policy 2:1 (Draft of New BOR Policy 2:23:1)

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: External Review of Proposed Graduate Program

NUMBER: 2+12:23:1

A. PURPOSE

Supporting BOR Policy 2:23 with new graduate program requests, this policy serves ~~To~~ ensure proposed new graduate programs are of the highest quality. Therefore, an independent assessment of the program's planned curriculum, structure, staffing, facilities, ~~equipment~~equipment, and resources will be conducted by one or more qualified independent external consultants. The findings from the external review will be used to refine the proposed program prior to its submission to the Board of Regents for consideration.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. External Review: A review of a new graduate program proposal by an independent external consultant. ~~The evaluation of a proposed new graduate program by an independent external consultant for the purpose of providing feedback to the university that will improve the planned new program.~~
2. Graduate Degree: A student's primary area of study at the master's, specialist's, or doctoral level:
 - 2.1. Master's Degree: A program comprised of advanced study and course work beyond the bachelor's degree, typically in academic fields or professional fields.
 - 2.2. Specialist's Degree: A program which requires a minimum of 60 credit hours beyond a baccalaureate degree or a minimum of 30 credit hours beyond a master's degree.
 - 2.3. Doctoral Degree: The program is the highest academic qualification and is typically in research fields or professional fields.
3. Independent External Consultant: A highly qualified expert in the discipline of the proposed new graduate program ~~who is~~ contracted by the Board of Regents on behalf of the university to evaluate the planned program ~~through an external review.~~
4. New Program: This policy applies to all graduate/professional (master, specialist, doctorate) degrees.
5. Site Visit: The planned time in which the independent external consultant interviews campus stakeholders including university leaders, academic leaders, program faculty, and others as appropriate to fully understand the planned new graduate program as a part of the external review. The site visit should also present the independent external consultant the opportunity to evaluate the sufficiency of facilities, equipment, and resources necessary for the planned new graduate program, where appropriate. The site visit may be conducted on campus or virtually, based on the method most appropriate to the proposed new program and most feasible for the independent external consultant and university.

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. Independent external consultants retained by the Board shall evaluate proposals for new graduate programs unless waived by the Executive Director.
3. The Board shall receive copies of all consultants' reports.
4. In the event a waiver is provided due to an accreditation review, then the report from that accreditation review will be submitted to the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting following the final report.
5. The university shall where appropriate implement best practices, curriculum programming that enhances the overall program, and reflect recommendations where they advance student outcomes.

D. PROCESS AND TIMELINE

AAC Guidelines will provide more additional information on the process via the Graduate Program Guide.

1. Selection of Consultants

- 1.1. The university requesting the new graduate program shall compile a list of at least five (5) potential consultants and provide the list to the System Chief Academic Officer (CAO) through the system academic affairs process. The system academic affairs designee or his/her designee. The CAO shall recommend consultants to the Board of Regent Board Executive Director or designee; the Board may delegate the selection of consultants to the Executive Director.
- 1.2. At least minimum of one consultant shall review all graduate program proposals, proposed master's level program; at least two consultants shall review a proposed doctoral program.

+2.1.3. An update will be provided to the Board of Regents Committee A.

2. Agreements, Fees, and Expenses

- 2.1. The CAO or his/her designee The system academic affairs staff shall inform consultants of evaluation expectations and required reports.
- 2.2. Each consultant shall execute a written consulting agreement. The system academic affairs staff will set the pricing and each consultant shall execute a written consulting agreement.

2.1.—

2.2.2.3. The university proposing the program shall pay consultant fees and expenses.

Commented [MJK2]: Moving from two to one for all graduate programs at a minimum. Campuses could continue with two but not required.

3. The Evaluation Process

- 3.1. The ~~CAO or his/her designee~~ system academic affairs staff, in cooperation with the university, shall provide each consultant with materials related to the proposed program.
- 3.2. The system academic affairs staff ~~CAO or his/her designee~~ shall ~~schedule~~ arrange a visit to the university.
- 3.3. ~~The visit can be virtual if all parties agree to this experience, setting.~~
- 3.4. ~~so that the consultant~~ Consultant(s) ~~may will~~ will conduct interviews and if in person will examine facilities and equipment.
- 3.5. At least one member of the Board academic affairs staff shall accompany the consultant(s) during the visit to the university.
- ~~3.2.3.6.~~ 3.3.6. The Board academic affairs ~~Board~~ staff present during a campus ~~visit~~ meeting/visit shall participate in an exit interview with the consultant(s).
- ~~3.3.3.7.~~ 3.3.7. Consultants shall meet with university staff at multiple levels of authority, including faculty proposed to teach in the new program, department and/or college leadership (e.g., dean(s), department head, program director, etc.) and university leadership (president, provost, dean(s), etc.).
- 3.8. The Board academic affairs staff ~~CAO or his/her designee~~ shall arrange to receive a final written report from consultants within thirty days.
- 3.9. Board academic affairs ~~The CAO or his/her designee~~ may request an executive summary of major findings prior to thirty days as needed.
- ~~3.4.3.10.~~ 3.4.10. Consultants may prepare individual reports or a joint report that clearly indicates any differences in opinion.
- ~~3.5.3.11.~~ 3.5.11. Board academic affairs ~~The CAO~~, upon receipt of the written report(s), shall provide a copy to the vice president of academic affairs and the president of the university.

4. The University Response

- 4.1. The university may prepare a formal written response to recommendations made by the consultant(s).
- 4.2. The university shall submit a revised proposal request if the consultant(s) recommend(s) significant changes in the program.
- 4.3. The university's response may include requests for new courses recommended by the consultant(s).

5.E. PROCESS AND TIMELINE ~~Waiving the External Review~~

~~5.1.~~

~~6.~~ Waiving the External Review

The Board of Regents Executive Director may waive the external review. This can occur for the following reasons.

1. ~~In~~ instances where the requesting university has a preexisting closely related program or specialization.
2. ~~and/or w~~ And where the proposed new graduate program has limited curricular additions or modifications.
3. ~~and/or wh~~ Or where the accreditation for the proposed new graduate program requires an external review as part of a site visit that would result in an equivalent written report to the university.
 - 3.1. Should the BOR external review be waived due to an external review conducted by the accreditor, the university must still comply with Board Policy 2.1, Section 4, University Response.
 - 3.2. The university may use its formal written response (if necessary) to the accreditor as its formal written response to the Board of Regents.
 - 3.3. The BOR may choose to approve a new program request before receipt of the accreditor's report and university response.

Commented [HR3]: #3 is new

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR June 1988; BOR June 1992; October 2014.