

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: III – C (1)

DATE: April 1-2, 2015

SUBJECT: New Site Request: SDSU BS in Geography

South Dakota State University (SDSU) requests authorization to deliver the BS in Geography through online delivery. SDSU makes the request based on increased demand from non-traditional, place-bound students, many of whom cannot travel to Brookings to complete the existing Geography major. In addition, SDSU cites market analysis by the Education Advisory Board (EAB) showing the demand for individuals with a bachelor’s degree and geography-related skills increasing 85 percent nationwide from 2010 to 2013.

This proposal supports SDSU’s IMPACT 2018 strategic plan, specifically to “Use emerging technologies and institutional collaboration to provide undergraduate, graduate, professional and continuing education focused on traditional and adult learners across the state, in the region, nation and globally.” SDSU estimates the online program will initially attract five new students to the university annually, with an additional increase of five additional students per year through year four.

SDSU is not requesting new state resources to deliver the program. Funding for the program will come from self-support tuition revenue generated from online tuition.

RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Approve SDSU’s request to offer the B.S. in Geography through online distance delivery as described in Attachment I.

**South Dakota Board of Regents
New Site: Request to Offer an Existing Degree Program**

Use this form to request authorization to deliver an existing degree program at a new site or by distance delivery. The Executive Director or the Board may request additional information.

University	South Dakota State University
Degree(s) and Program	B.S. in Geography
New Site(s)	Online
Proposed Implementation (term)	Fall 2015

University Approval

To the Board and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this request, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

David L. Chicoine

2-4-2015

President of the University

Date

After approval by the President, a signed copy of the proposal should be transmitted to the Executive Director. Only after Executive Director review should the proposal be posted on the university web site and the Board staff and the other universities notified of the URL.

1. What is the need for this program in this site (these sites)? What is the expected demand for graduates in the site(s)?

South Dakota State University (SDSU) requests authorization to offer the Geography major for the B.S. degree through online delivery. A recent market analysis by the Education Advisory Board (EAB) shows that market demand for individuals with a bachelor's degree and geography-related skills has increased 85 percent nationwide from 2010 to 2013¹. The geographical skills in demand include both physical and human geography. As a science, physical geography allows individuals to acquire understandings of how environmental systems operate and provides individuals with the technical skills to analyze such systems. As a social science, human geography imparts skills to analyze such phenomena as population dynamics and migration, rural and urban relationships, networks of spatial interaction, and cultural perceptions of the environment. The study of both physical and human geography develops skills to enable a person to understand and analyze the role of geographical scale (e.g., local, regional, national, global) and how these scales interact to produce and reproduce natural and human spatial systems.

This proposal for an online Geography major supports SDSU's *IMPACT 2018* strategic plan². It specifically helps to fulfill Goal #3c: "Use emerging technologies and institutional collaboration to provide undergraduate, graduate, professional and continuing education focused on traditional

¹ Education Advisory Board. 2014. *Research Data Pull: Market Demand for Individuals with a Bachelor's Degree and Geography Related Skills*. The Advisory Board Company (eab.com).

² <http://www.sdstate.edu/impact2018/>

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and adult learners across the state, in the region, nation and globally.” *IMPACT 2018* precisely identifies the development of online degrees as a metric for achieving this goal.

Because the growing demand for geographical skills is partially being fuelled by non-traditional, place-bound, and isolated students, many of whom cannot travel to Brookings to complete the existing Geography major, this proposal for an online Geography major was developed and designed to reach students across the state and beyond. Current online Geography courses already are attracting many of these students.

2. Is any regental university authorized to offer a similar program at the new site(s)? Is any non-system institution offering a similar program at the new site(s)? If either answer is “yes,” identify the institution(s) and program(s) and explain why authorization is requested.

South Dakota State University is the only regental university that offers bachelor and masters’ degrees in geography. Private universities in South Dakota also do not offer Geography programs.

3. Are students expected to be new to the university or redirected from other programs or both? Complete the table and explain how the estimates were developed. How will the new site(s) affect enrollments in other campus and off-campus programs in the regental system?

As seen in the table below, the new online program is expected to initially attract five new students to the university and the numbers are expected to increase by five new students per year. It is estimated that two students currently enrolled in the onsite program may elect to take some or all of their courses online if given the option. Onsite students are already enrolling in the online courses that are available.

	Fiscal Years*			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Estimated	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
New to the university	5	10	15	20
Redirected from other programs	2	2	2	2
= Total in the program at the site	7	12	17	22
Credit hours, majors in program courses**(a)	84	144	204	264
Graduates		2 (b)	5	10

* Do not include current year.

** This is the total number of credit hours generated by the majors in the required or elective program courses. The same numbers are used in Appendix B – Budget.

(a) Credit hours are based on an average of 6 credits per student per term (Fall/Spring).

(b) Some students can graduate quickly because they already have completed existing online courses.

Impact on Existing Programs

Over the previous four years, the Department of Geography has been slowly increasing the number of courses that it has been offering online. This proposal represents a commitment to offer all the courses that satisfy the major and also offer them regularly so that students can be assured of completing the program in four years. Because the department already has made adjustments to offer the courses, any negative impact on existing programs should be negligible.

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However, approval of the program will give the department the ability to advertise and recruit more students and thereby offer a greater variety of courses more frequently. The increased offerings of online Geography courses has been supported by offsite, part-time instructors who work in industry and provide insight to students about industrial expectations and standards and who sometimes serve as a conduit to internship and employment opportunities. These online courses are frequently chosen by onsite students who are seeking to maximize their educational experiences. This means that a robust, fully operational online Geography degree likewise will offer more educational opportunities to SDSU's onsite students and thereby strengthen the onsite program.

4. Complete the table and explain any special circumstances. Attach a copy of the program as it appears in the current catalog. If any program modifications are requested, attach that form. Explain how the new courses will be delivered. Attach the new course request forms.

B.S. in Geography	Credit hours	Credits currently available from this university at this site	Credits currently available from other universities available at this site	Credits currently available via distance	Courses new to this university
System General Education Requirements	30	30	30	30	0
Institutional Graduation Requirements	5	5	3	5	0
<i>Subtotal, General Education Requirements</i>	35				
College of Arts & Sciences Requirements	3	3	3	3	0
Major Requirements	35	35	9	35	0
<i>Subtotal, Requirements of the Proposed Major</i>	38				
Electives	47	47	47	47	0
Total, Degree with Proposed Major	120	120	92	120	0

The curriculum as it appears in the current catalog is provided in Appendix A. All courses required to complete the B.S. in Geography are available online.

5. How will you provide student services comparable to those available for students on the main campus?

A program area advisor will serve as the advisor to students in the major. Appointments may be conducted using e-mail, phone, Skype, and other technologies facilitating long-distance communication. A student services facilitator is housed in Continuing and Distance Education and is available to assist students in connecting to necessary resources on-campus and online.

Library support services will be available to students through a variety of means:

- Students can contact librarians for research assistance. The Geography Librarian provides on-line research guides and is available for consultations with faculty and students.
- Distance Library Services include book and article delivery for materials owned by the library. Students may request materials not held by the library through interlibrary loan.
- SDSU students have on-line access to research databases such as *Web of Science*, *EBSCOhost MegaFILE*, and *JSTOR*.

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Other student services such as disability services accommodations will be available to students upon request.

6. Is this program accredited by a specialized accrediting body? If so, address any program accreditation issues and costs related to offering the program at the new site(s).

This program is not accredited.

7. Does the University request any exceptions to Board policy for delivery at the new site(s)? Explain requests for exceptions to Board policy. If no exceptions are requested, enter "None."

None

8. Costs, Budget & Resources Related to New Courses at the Site: Explain the amount and source(s) of any one-time and continuing investments in personnel, professional development, release time, instructional technology and software, other O&M, facilities, student services, etc needed to implement the program at the new site(s). Complete Appendix B – Budget using the system form.

The program will be funded by self-support tuition revenue generated from online tuition.

A budget is not provided because the courses for this program already are online or soon will be. Any addition of courses to meet growth will be meet by self-support tuition. Therefore, no additional costs or resources will be needed.

Courses will be taught by SDSU Geography faculty and temporary faculty. If online enrollment in the B.S. in Geography grows to a level where a new faculty member is needed, the position will be funded with self-support tuition revenue.

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Appendix A

B.S. in Geography - 2014-2015 Program Requirements

Systems General Education Requirements			30
SGR 1 – Written Communication ENGL 101 Composition I ENGL 201 Composition II			6
SGR 2 – Oral Communication SPCM 101 Fundamentals of Speech			3
SGR 3 – Social Sciences/Diversity			6
SGR 4 – Humanities and Arts/Diversity			6
SGR 5 – Mathematics			3
SGR 6 – Natural Sciences			6
Institutional Graduation Requirements			5
IGR 1 – First Year Seminar			2
IGR 2 – Cultural Awareness and Social and Environmental Responsibility			3
College Requirements – Bachelor of Science			34
<i>Additional required credits of coursework beyond SGRs, IGRs, Major, and Support Courses</i>			3
Natural Sciences			14
Social Sciences			12
Humanities			8
Major Requirements			35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must complete a minimum of 18 upper division credits in major courses and earn at least a “C” in each course used to meet the major requirements. Maximum of 3 credits of GEOG 494 (Internship) 			
Major Core			23
GEOG	131-131L	Physical Geography: Weather and Climate	4
GEOG	132-132L	Physical Geography: Natural Landscapes	4
GEOG	200	Introduction to Human Geography	3
GEOG	210	World Regional Geography	3
GEOG	382 or 421	Quantitative Research Methods in Geography Qualitative Research Methods in Geography	3
GEOG	447	Geography of the Future	3
GEOG	472 or 383or 483	Introduction to GIS Cartography Air Photo Interpretation	3
Major/Technical Electives			12
Advanced Physical Geography and Human -Earth Relationships			3
GEOG	310 or 337 or 339 or 343 or 363 or 365 or 415	Soil Geography and Land Use Interpretation Atmospheric Sciences Geomorphology Environmental Hazards Rural Geography Land Use Planning Environmental Geography	3
Regional Geography and Advanced Human Geography			3
GEOG	212 or 219 or 317 or 320 or 351 or 353 or 400 or 405 or 425or 454 or 459 or 460 or 461 or 464	Geography of North America Geography of South Dakota Geography of Africa Regional Geography Economic Geography Geography of Religion Cultural Geography Historical Geography Population Geography Site Selection and Development Political Geography Geopolitics Urban Geography Local and Regional Planning Geography	3
Geography Electives*			6
GEOG	200-level and above, maximum of 3 credits of GEOG 494 (Internship)		6
Electives (Taken as needed to complete additional requirements)			47