

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Tuition and Fees: Distance Education Tuition

NUMBER: 5.5.2

A. PURPOSE

To establish the tuition structure for distance education students; to document approved tuition reduction programs; and to delineate the distribution of tuition components.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Active-Duty Military Personnel:** A person who is either in the military full time or in the Reserve or National Guard and placed on active duty status as authorized in Title 10, Title 5 and Title 32 of the Department of Defense Instruction 1205.18.
- 2. Distance Education:** As defined by federal regulations, distance education courses use one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor or instructors and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor or instructors, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies that may be used to offer distance education include: 1.) the internet, 2.) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices, 3.) audio conference, or 4.) other media used in course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed previously. As further defined by SARA policy, distance education also includes interactive video and correspondence courses or programs.
- 3. Distance Education Tuition:** The per credit hour charge that is assessed to students taking courses delivered through distance learning for the support of instruction and administrative costs.
- 4. Remedial Courses:** Courses delivered through distance education to students requiring additional assistance in the areas of English, Reading, or Mathematics in an effort to achieve expected competencies in these core academic skill areas.

C. POLICY

1. Distance Education Tuition

All courses offered via distance education will be at tuition rates established by the Board unless authorized by the Legislature and approved by the Board.

- 1.1. Standard Distance Education Tuition Rates:** The Board sets tuition rates each spring that are effective for the following summer, fall and spring terms. This rate is

comprised of the distance education tuition rate plus an eleven and one-half percent (11.5%) Higher Education Facilities Fund (HEFF) component, and a surcharge for the support of the Electronic University Consortium (EUC).

- 1.2. Per Credit Hour Rates: The distance education tuition rates are per credit hour rates for undergraduate and graduate students. There is no distinction between resident and nonresident students as there is with on-campus tuition.
- 1.3. Remedial On-Campus Courses: These courses will be assessed an amount equal to the undergraduate distance education tuition rate. No fees are to be charged in addition to this rate.

2. Tuition Allocations

- 2.1. All distance education tuition collected shall be deposited 88.5% into the BOR system tuition fund and 11.5% into the Higher Education Facilities Fund.
- 2.2. General Activity Fee: The campuses are required to allocate the equivalent of the per credit hour General Activity Fee (GAF) to the institution's GAF pool of funds for all distance education credit hours taken by on-campus students.
- 2.3. Salary Competitiveness: The Board will identify the per credit hour amount that is to be committed to the enhancement of salaries as part of the annual tuition and fee setting process. The campuses are required to allocate the equivalent of the per credit hour amount to enhance faculty and non-faculty exempt salaries. The annual revenue committed to salary enhancement from distance education tuition applies to all distance education credit hours taken by on-campus students.
- 2.4. Institutional Maintenance and Repair: The Board will identify the per credit hour amount that is to be committed to maintenance and repair (M&R), as well as the critical deferred maintenance bonds, as part of the annual tuition and fee setting process. The campuses are required to allocate the equivalent of the per credit hour amount to be committed to local M&R. The campus M&R dollars are retained locally in a separate fund and the revenue can only be expended on Board approved projects. The annual revenue committed to M&R from off-campus tuition applies to all distance education credit hours taken by on-campus students.
- 2.5. Technology Funds: The Board will identify the per credit hour amount that is to be committed to technology investments as part of the annual tuition and fee setting process. The campuses are required to allocate the equivalent of the per credit hour amount to be committed to technology investments. The technology investments include the amounts needed to support Regents Information Systems and the System Technology Fund, as well as campus technology. The annual revenue committed to technology investments from off-campus tuition applies to all distance education credit hours taken by on-campus students.

3. Distance Education Reduced Tuition Programs

Legislated and Board approved tuition and fee reductions and waivers apply to distance education and on-campus courses and programs with the following clarifications. (SDCL §13-55-23)

- 3.1. South Dakota National Guard Members (SDCL §33-6-5): Any member of the South

Dakota National Guard is entitled to a benefit of one hundred percent of the in-state resident tuition to be paid or otherwise credited by the Board of Regents. This benefit is applied after the federal tuition benefits and may not exceed 100% of the tuition costs. The graduate benefit is capped at 32 credit hours, while the undergraduate benefit is capped at 128 credit hours.

- 3.2. Active-Duty Military Personnel: The undergraduate distance education tuition rate assessed to active-duty military personnel may not exceed the federal tuition assistance benefit for active-duty military.
- 3.3. Employees of the State of South Dakota: State employees, who meet the eligibility requirements for reduced tuition, will receive the same tuition reduction as that provided for on-campus courses up to a maximum of six credit hours per semester. The benefit will equal one-half the resident on-campus tuition rate for undergraduate or graduate courses.
 - 3.3.1. Employees of the state who meet the following requirements and who are admitted to the university may be eligible for a 50% tuition reduction for distance education undergraduate and graduate courses up to a maximum of six credit hours per semester. An employee of the state is eligible for tuition reduction as long as he or she:
 - 3.3.1.1. Is continuously employed by the state for a period of one year in a benefit eligible position;
 - 3.3.1.2. Is a bona fide resident of the state;
 - 3.3.1.3. Maintains an academic grade of 2.0 or better;
 - 3.3.1.4. Maintains an academic rating of competent or better in the most recent merit appraisal or is otherwise certified as competent by the immediate supervisor; and
 - 3.3.1.5. Is a benefit-eligible employee.
 - 3.3.2. Registration in any course at the reduced tuition rate shall be limited to space available, as determined by the President or designee; after all of the full-time or full tuition paying student have registered. The Board of Regents shall maintain an annual record of the number of participants and the tuition dollar value of such participation.
- 3.4. Elementary, Secondary, and HeadStart Teachers, School Counselors, or Vocational Instructor (SDCL §13-55-24): Certain elementary, secondary, and HeadStart school teachers, school counselors, and vocational instructors pursuing any undergraduate or graduate distance education course will receive the same tuition reduction as that provided for on-campus courses. The benefit will equal one-half the resident on-campus tuition rate.

Eligibility is limited to teachers, counselors, and vocational instructors who:

- are bona fide residents of South Dakota;

- are employed by an accredited school as defined in Title 13;
- are required by state law, administrative rules, or an employment contract to attend college as a condition of employment or to maintain a certificate;
- are certified as eligible for this program by the school district or private school by which they are employed; and
- maintain an average academic grade of 3.0 or better.

The right of any teacher, counselor, or vocational instructor to participate in this tuition reduction is limited to the space available, as determined by the President or designee; in any course after all of the full-time or full tuition paying students have registered.

An eligible teacher, counselor, or vocational instructor may receive the tuition reduction for a maximum of six credit hours per academic year. For the purposes of this section, the academic year shall begin with the fall semester and include all of the following summer.

- 3.5. Survivors of Certain Firefighters, Certified Law Enforcement Officers and Emergency Medical Technicians (SDCL §13-55-22): If a firefighter or certified law enforcement officer or an emergency medical technician dies as a direct result of injuries received in performance of official duties, the survivor, upon being duly accepted for enrollment into any state-supported university of higher education or state-supported technical or vocational school, shall be allowed to obtain a bachelor's degree or vocational degree for so long as the survivor is eligible, free of any tuition. However, the bachelor's degree or vocational degree shall be earned within a thirty-six month or eight semester period or its equivalent.
- 3.6. Children and Spouses of National Guardsmen Disabled or Deceased in Line of Duty (SDCL §13-55-10): South Dakota residents under the age of 25 years whose father, mother, or spouse died or sustained a total permanent disability resulting from duty as a member of the South Dakota National Guard, while on state active duty or any authorized training duty, shall be entitled to tuition without cost and be entitled to attend any course or courses of student.
- 3.7. Visually Impaired Persons (SDCL § 13-55-11 through 13-55-13): Residents of South Dakota who are visually impaired and who are eligible for admission may pursue any course of student without payment of tuition and fees that other students are required to pay directly to the university until they have received two hundred twenty-five (225) semester hours of credit or its equivalent.
- 3.8. A person shall be deemed to be visually impaired if he or she cannot, with the use of correcting glasses, see sufficiently to perform ordinary activities for which eyesight is essential. The impairment shall be certified according to SDCL §13-55-11.1.
- 3.9. Children of Residents Who Died During Service in Armed Forces (SDCL §1355-6 through 13-55-9): Certain children of residents who died while in the service of the armed forces of the United States are entitled to free tuition and to any course or courses of study without the payment of any charges or costs, therefore:
 - 3.9.1. Eligibility is limited to South Dakota residents under the age of twenty-five

years.

- 3.9.2. The deceased parent, mother, or father, must have been a veteran as defined in SDCL § 33-17-1, must have been a bona fide resident of South Dakota for at least six months immediately prior to entry into active services, and must have died from any cause while in the service of the armed forces of the United States.
- 3.10. Dependents of Prisoners or Missing in Action (SDCL §13-55-9): Dependents of prisoners of war or persons missing in action, upon being admitted to a university, shall be entitled to eight semesters or twelve quarters, free of tuition and mandatory fees, other than subsistence expenses, for either full- or part-time student, for so long as he or she is eligible.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR October 2004; June 2011; April 2013; May 2013; December 2014; May 2016; June 2017; June 2018; May 2019; October 2023 (Clerical); BOR December 2023; BOR April 2024; BOR April 2025.