SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Undergraduate General Education Requirements

NUMBER: 2.3.7

A. PURPOSE

To provide for the requisite oversight that the general education component of all baccalaureate and associate programs shall consist of the appropriate System General Education Requirements. Students may only select general education courses from an approved list to meet the System General Education Requirements.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Academic Program:** Academic program is defined as the degree program 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 Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).
3. **Civics Proficiency:** A comprehensive understanding of civic knowledge, values, and skills, enabling active participation in civic life as informed and responsible citizens.
4. **General Education:** Curriculum defined to develop learners' general knowledge, literacy, skills, and competencies which equip students for success with advanced curriculum, program and major completion, and career competencies.
5. **General Education Committee:** A committee representing the institutions and the system on General Education curriculum and advising the Academic Affairs Council on policy, practices, curriculum, and other needs for general education.
6. **Learning Outcomes:** Defined as the gaining of knowledge in cognitive and content competencies, skills, and social-emotional competencies associated with academic learning.
7. **Receiving Institution:** The Regental university to which the student is transferring.
8. **Regental Internal Transfer:** Process where an undergraduate course is used to meet a plan of study requirement at any Regental universities or when graduate credit is used on a converted or actual credit basis to meet undergraduate degree requirements for a Regental accelerated program (refer to BOR Policy 2.4.2).

9. **Seamless Transfer:** A framework based on the principles of serving student needs, using state resources efficiently, and expanding opportunities for post-secondary attainment in South Dakota in the process of students transferring into South Dakota.
10. **Sending Institution:** The institution from which a student is transferring.
11. **University Accreditation Institution:** Higher Learning Commission is the accrediting institution for each of the Regental institutions.

C. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Governance

1.1. Board of Regents Policy 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.

1.2. Each of the institutions must comply with the accrediting organization and will be evaluated by that organization.

1.3. The System General Education Requirements shall incorporate civics proficiency, effective with the summer 2025 academic catalog, for all new and transfer students.

2. General Education Goals

There are six (6) System General Education Goals for which general education has been designed for meeting student outcomes. The General Education Committee and Academic Affairs Council will review all general education requests in reference to these goals.

GOAL #1: Students will write effectively and responsibly and will understand and interpret the written expression of others.

GOAL #2: Students will communicate effectively and responsibly through listening and speaking.

GOAL #3: Students will understand the organization, potential, and variability of the human community through study of the social sciences.

GOAL #4: Students will understand the variability and complexity of the human experience through study of the arts and humanities.

GOAL #5: Students will understand and apply fundamental mathematical processes and reasoning.

GOAL #6: Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world.

3. Seamless Transfer

3.1. All internal Regental general education courses will be accepted regardless of the receiving institution's course offering (all undergraduate) as well as if the student fulfilled or partially fulfilled the general education requirements.

3.2. All internally transferred general education coursework will continue to count toward the designated goal areas from the sending institution even if the receiving institution has different approved course lists for those goals.

3.3. All prerequisites for associate and baccalaureate programs must be completed as determined by the student's academic degree plan. See BOR Policy 2.2.2 series for additional guidance on transfer of credits.

D. SYSTEM GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Baccalaureate Degree Course/Credit Distribution

System General Education Requirements shall include 30 credits of course work. At least three (3) credit hours shall be earned from each of six (6) goals (total of 18 credits) set out in section three (3) below. Each institution shall identify 12 credit hours of additional course work from the six (6) goals. The distribution of courses/credits will be maintained as guidelines managed and approved by the Academic Affairs Council and approved by the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs.

System Goal	***BHSU***	***DSU***	***NSU***	***SDSM&T***	***SDSU***	***USD***
Goal #1: Written Communication	6	6	6	6	6	6
Goal #2: Oral Communication	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #3: Social Sciences	6	6	6	6	6	6
Goal #4: Arts and Humanities	6	6	6	6	6	6
Goal #5: Mathematics	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #6: Natural Sciences	6	6	6	6	6	6
	30	***30***	***30***	***30***	***30***	***30***

2. Associate Degree Course/Credit Distribution

System General Education Requirements shall include 24 credits of course work. At least three (3) credit hours shall be earned from each of six (6) goals (total of 18 credits) set out in section 3 below. Each institution shall identify six (6) credit hours of additional course work from the six goals. For those institutions that allow it, students have the flexibility to select an additional three (3) credit hours from Goals three (3), four (4) or six (6) with courses selected from different disciplinary prefixes. The distribution of courses/credits will be maintained as guidelines managed and approved by the Academic Affairs Council and approved by the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs.

System Goal	***BHSU***	***DSU***	***NSU***	***SDSM&T***	***SDSU***	***USD***
Goal #1: Written Communication	6	6	6	6	6	6
Goal #2: Oral Communication	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #3: Social Sciences	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #4: Arts and Humanities	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #5: Mathematics	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goal #6: Natural Sciences	3	3	3	6	3	3
Goal #3, #4, #6 Flexibility	3	3	3	0	3	3
	24	***24***	***24***	***24***	***24***	***24***

3. Approved Courses Meeting System General Education Requirements

The finite list of courses approved to meet each of the established system goals will be maintained in the Academic Affair Guidelines. Proposed changes to the courses permitted

to meet System General Education Requirements are approved by the Board of Regents each year during the March meeting impacting the next academic year. The list of courses approved to meet each of the established system goals will be closely monitored by the System General Education Committee and Academic Affairs Council to ensure course relevance, program coherence, and breadth of student choice.

4. System General Education Committee

Each university shall appoint at least one representative to the System General Education Committee. Additional representatives may be drawn from all SDBOR universities as needed. Two members of the System Assessment Committee will also serve on the System General Education Committee. A system academic affairs staff member and a member of the Academic Affairs Council (or designee) will serve as ex officio members. The Committee shall:

4.1. Review the AAC Guidelines related to the project charter as new members are added to this committee.

4.2. Advise the Academic Affairs Council on matters related to general education, including student learning outcomes, curriculum, policy, guidelines, and processes to ensure faculty oversight of the general education curriculum.

4.3. Specify student learning outcomes with faculty input for each of the general education goals identified in section C**.**

4.4. Partner on best practices and working together to understand the needs of each institution and the system.

4.5. Report as applicable according to BOR Policy 2.3.9.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

- BOR Policy 2.2.2.1 – Seamless Transfer of Credit
- BOR Policy 2.3.9 – Assessment
- AAC Guidelines Section 2.3.7 – General Education

SOURCE:

BOR January 1985; BOR June 1992; BOR March 1995; BOR May 1996; BOR December 1997; BOR August 1999; BOR January 2000; BOR January 2001; BOR June 2001; BOR October 2001; BOR March 2003; BOR June 2003; BOR March 2005; BOR December 2005; BOR March 2006; BOR October 2006; BOR December 2006; BOR June 2007; BOR December 2007; BOR March 2008; BOR December 2008; BOR August 2009; BOR December 2009; BOR June 2010; BOR December 2010; BOR December 2011; BOR March 2012; BOR June 2012; BOR December 2012; BOR May 2013; BOR December 2013; BOR April 2014; BOR October 2014; BOR December 2014; BOR December 2015; BOR March-April 2016; BOR August 2016; BOR May 2017; BOR May 2019; BOR August 2022; August 2022 (Clerical); October 2023 (Clerical); March 2023 (Clerical); BOR April 2025; November 2025 (Executive Director).