

October 16, 2013

Dr. David Chicoine President South Dakota State University Box 2201 Brookings, SD 57007-2298

Dear President Chicoine:

This letter is accompanied by a copy of the Multi-Location Visit Report completed following Dr. Diane Fladeland's visit to South Dakota State University. The pattern of operations at the locations visited appears to be adequate and no further review or monitoring is necessary.

Within the Multi-Location Visit Report, you will find brief comments on instructional oversight, academic services, adequacy of assessment of student performance, student services, facilities, and marketing and recruitment information. I encourage you to consider these comments as advice and suggestions for continued improvement of the additional locations.

Thank you again for your flexibility and hospitality in arranging the Multi-Location Visit, which fulfill federal regulations related to multiple off campus locations. The completed report will be included in your institution's permanent file.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Multi-Location Visit or its report, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Patricia Newton-Curran

Associate Vice President for Accreditation Processes

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Enclosure



Multi-Location Visit Report

Institution:	South Dakota State University
Ad. Location #1:	Capital University, 925 E. Sioux Ave. Pierre, SD 57501
Ad. Location #2:	University Center, 4300 Cheyenne Blvd. Rapid City, SD 57703
Ad. Location #3:	
	(please include Additional Locations Name, Street, Town, State, Zip Code)
Date Reviewed:	September 16, 17, 2013
Evaluator Name, Institution, & Title:	Diane Fladeland, University of Mary, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Instructions: In order to document effective administrative systems for managing multiple additional locations, please complete the following. For each item, check **adequate** or attention needed, and indicate in Comments the institution's strengths and/or opportunities for improvement in controlling and delivering degree programs off-campus. If comments pertain to a specific location, they should be included along with the identity of that location.

Overview Statement. Provide information about current additional locations and the institution's general approach to off-campus instruction. Describe the growth pattern at the institution since the last review of off-campus instruction. Provide information about the involvement of external organizations or other higher education institutions.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:	X □ adequate	□ attention
needed		

Comments: Capital University and University Center are both new facilities- 4 and 2 years respectively- and designed specifically for the SD University system distance education locations. The University has been in these communities for many years but with the support of the local community and the SD Board of Regents, new buildings were constructed to house the distance education programs. Faculty, staff and the organizational support from SDSU is in place to facilitate the education of students in these communities. Enrollment (student credit hours generated) is flat to somewhat reduced at both sites. SDSU is continually evaluating the need in these communities and adding or discontinuing offerings as needed. These facilities represent collaboration between all SD universities with programs offered by six SD higher education institutions, Black Hills State, Dakota State, and Northern State, SD School of Mines, SDSU, and USD. Generally programs are non-competitive with student needs at the center of system's processes. There are no specific plans to add additional locations at this time though students may be served in a cohort model in an area of need such as in collaboration with a Native American community.

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Institutional Planning. What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively plans for growth and maintenance of additional locations? Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is adequate. Describe whether the financial planning and budgeting process has proven effective at additional locations.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: SDSU completed a strategic planning initiative, "Impact 2018" in May 2013. The process included visits by the President and other University leadership to distance education locations to gather input from faculty, students and community stakeholders. Goal 3 in this plan, "Extend the reach and depth of the University by developing strategic programs and collaborations", represents the University's commitment to these outreach programs. Faculty and administrators at the sites said their input is regularly sought and program directors/academic chairs at the home campus in Brookings, seek input from faculty at the sites in annual planning. The new facilities represent the support for these sites from both the local communities and the SD Board of Regents. Marketing materials originate at the home campus and all materials reviewed were consistent with information provided by students, faculty and staff. In the past the locations were allotted a consistent budget developed and approved by the Board of Regents, consistent with the process for all institutions in the SD system. The system is working toward making each location an independent cost center, with all tuition and fees returned to the location to use for paying expenses. Site directors confirm that the budget is available for hiring faculty and instructional expenses. A donor has gifted the Rapid City Center of SDSU with a large parcel of land for expansion of the current facility if necessary. This would be a potential solution for the nursing program currently housed in the West River Health Center which is at capacity.

Facilities. What evidence demonstrates that the facilities at the additional locations meet the needs of the students and the curriculum? Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; handicapped access; and other (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.)

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: The facilities at both sites are new, well designed and maintained, with modern classrooms, laboratories, access to computers and wireless technology, seminar and meeting rooms and offices. Both sites have student lounges, parking and are handicapped accessible. The facilities are open to students for study and group work throughout the day and until the end of the last class in the evening. The Rapid City Center also includes a coffee shop and bookstore. The Pierre Center staff arrange for textbooks for purchase at the first day of each class. Faculty offices are available though these offices do not always assure privacy.

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Instructional Oversight. What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively oversees instruction at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, faculty qualifications, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: The Assistant Vice President for International Affairs and Outreach and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs as well as faculty and site directors at each site confirmed that the program faculty and Chair of each curricular program at the home campus in Brookings oversees and supervises the off campus programs. The approval of the syllabus template, review of course and faculty evaluations, hiring of faculty, and curricular sequencing is the responsibility of the program director in collaboration with the coordinators at each site. SDSU has a policy regarding required enrollment for a class to be offered. If the class is necessary for a student to graduate, the course will be offered despite low enrollment. Students at both sites indicated that courses they have been scheduled to take were cancelled due to low enrollment. The administration is reducing the frequency of offering some low enrollment courses from each semester to once/year to increase enrollment. Students and staff acknowledge that this requires careful advising. If a class is canceled due to inadequate enrollment the student can often take the course online. A review of the curriculum vitae of faculty at each site confirms that they have the required qualifications and are consistent with the qualifications expected of faculty at the home campus. Many full and part time faculty have served at these locations for many years, have loyalty to the program and express enthusiasm for continuing their service.

Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support. What evidence demonstrates that the institution has appropriately qualified and sufficient staff and faculty in place for the location, and that the institution supports and evaluates personnel at off-campus locations? Consider the processes in place for selecting, training, and orienting faculty at the location.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: Faculty vita and course schedules were reviewed at each site. Faculty with the appropriate credentials are teaching scheduled courses. Class enrollment in the general education offerings may rarely reach 30 but most classes are small with 10-12 students/class or fewer. Students stated they appreciate the small classes and have ready access to faculty, staff and advisors. The Centers are staffed during class days until the last class is completed in the evening. The undergraduate advisor at the Rapid City center has a terminal degree and all students affirm her competence in helping them with their scheduling, registration and putting them in contact with an advisor from their major program in Brookings. The advisor at the Pierre center is the initial contact for all students at the location. Several students noted that if they are not referred to an advisor in their major, there have been scheduling errors with

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unnecessary courses completed. The Pierre center administration noted that their practice is for each student to have a major advisor from the home campus as well as an advisor at the location center. All faculty and courses are evaluated each semester with the IDEA evaluation. These are reviewed by the program directors/chairs at the main campus as well as the administration at the locations. Faculty and administration stated that they have very little turnover in teaching faculty, that as they have been in each community for several years, they have a network of qualified faculty available to teach scheduled courses. Documentation of a formal orientation program for new full and adjunct faculty at the sites was not available. Faculty indicated that the administrators, program directors and other faculty provide information necessary for them to be successful in their instruction, including providing the syllabus template, frequent communication by Skype or with the Desire 2 Learn interactive platform available throughout the SDSU system.

Student Support. What evidence demonstrates that the institution delivers, supports, and manages necessary student services at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: The facilities have excellent computer labs and equipment. The SDSU system uses the Desire 2 Learn LMS and it is expected that all students on the main campus and at distance education locations have access to this platform. Students, faculty and administrators indicated that the CIO at the main campus has not given SDSU distance ed. students accessibility to the system due to concerns about security. SDSU students can access the system only by logging into the system through another university (NSU, USD, etc.) or with assistance from the IT support staff. Administrators from the home campus and site directors have requested access for these students but had not had a response by the time of the site visit. Library resources are available through the state library, located in the capital city, Pierre. At the Pierre center, the librarians from the state library come to the center to give an onsite orientation to the services. At both sites, the SDSU library is available with a large collection of full text online resources which the students find adequate for their learning and research needs. Tutoring and advising services are available at both locations. Advisors make referrals as needed for financial aid concerns and placement to staff at the home campus. The Rapid City location has pro bono counseling services available in conjunction with the Masters of Counseling program offered at that site. The Rapid City center has initiated a Student Advisory Board with undergraduate and graduate student representatives. This committee meets every month and reports to the Director of the center. This center also has a veteran's center staffed 15 hours each week to serve the needs of the students who are veterans and currently serving in the military. A large military base is within a couple of miles of the Rapid City center.

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Evaluation and Assessment. What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate(Rapid City) X□ attention needed(Pierre)

Comments: All students in the SDSU system, including the distance education locations, are assessed as rising juniors with the CAAP test. These results are analyzed by the deans and program directors on the home campus. The staff do not believe that results, however, are sorted by location for cohort analysis with test results from the main campus. The programs at the Rapid City location are primarily graduate and all syllabi reviewed had measurable outcomes and an assessment centralized at the home campus. Likewise the nursing programs at both sites have well developed syllabi including consistent course descriptions across sites, measurable outcomes, assessment and program evaluation processes in place. The learning outcomes and assessment documented in the syllabi for general education courses at the Pierre site were inconsistent in quality. While the program directors at the main campus are responsible for the quality of all general education courses, it is unclear how that quality is assessed. A course template is provided for each course, but a review of syllabi noted that not all courses follow the template.

Continuous Improvement. What evidence demonstrates that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at its additional locations? Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of additional locations and ensure alignment of additional locations with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ attention needed

Comments: SDSU has just completed an intensive strategic planning initiative which included visits to off campus locations by the president, other members of the leadership team, faculty and staff, to discuss community needs and get input. The resultant plan, *Impact 2018, A Strategic Vision for South Dakota State University,* includes four goals with the Goal 3 to "extend the reach and depth of the University by developing strategic programs and collaborations". This goal includes the intent to enhance offerings at the University Centers using emerging technologies and institutional collaboration as well as to build strategic partnerships. The Assistant Vice President for Outreach visits each location each year to assess progress on planning initiatives. The Deans of the specific programs offered at each location also visit each site at least once/semester for planning and evaluation. All courses and faculty are evaluated with the IDEA system and Deans and program directors are responsible for assuring results from these surveys are used for program improvement and hiring decisions.

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The Rapid City location is working on a student satisfaction survey which will be use first time this fall.	ed for the
Marketing and Recruiting Information. What evidence confirms that the informati presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications is accur	
Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: X□ adequate □ needed	l attention
Comments: Marketing materials, brochures, catalogs, web sites, and news letters reviewed from both the Pierre and Rapid City locations. Materials were accurate an with approved programing. Marketing materials are published through the central difference that the home campus for quality control.	d consistent

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SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Select one of the following statements. Include, as appropriate, a summary of findings.

X Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations appears to be adequate, and no further review or monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission is necessary.

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Notification for Additional Locations Approval Form

(MACRO Web Application Approval)

Please complete these four questions
ONLY if an institution has been granted access to the
Notification for Additional Locations approval process.

X□ Yes	□ No	The institution has been accredited by the Commission, prior to seeking access to the streamlined process, for at least 10 consecutive years with no record of any action during that period for sanction, show-cause, or monitoring of issues related to the quality of instruction or to the oversight of existing additional locations or campuses.
X∐ Yes	☐ No	The institution has demonstrated success in overseeing more than three locations.
X Yes	☐ No	The institution has no other Commission or other legal restrictions on additional locations and/or programs offered off campus,
X□ Yes	□ No	The institution has appropriate systems at the institution to ensure quality control of locations that include clearly identified academic controls; regular evaluation by the institution of its locations; a pattern of adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic/support systems; financial stability; and long-range planning for future expansion.