



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

New Certificate

UNIVERSITY:	SDSU
TITLE OF PROPOSED CERTIFICATE:	Rural Health Certificate
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	Fall 2025
PROPOSED CIP CODE:	51.2201
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	Nursing
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	SGNU
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	Nursing
BANNER DIVISION CODE:	3N

Please check this box to confirm that:

- The individual preparing this request has read [AAC Guideline 2.3.2.2.C](#), which pertains to new certificate requests, and that this request meets the requirements outlined in the guidelines.
- This request will not be posted to the university website for review of the Academic Affairs Committee until it is approved by the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer.

University Approval

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

Institutional Approval Signature
President or Chief Academic Officer of the University

10/23/24

Date

1. Is this a graduate-level certificate or undergraduate-level certificate?

Undergraduate Certificate

Graduate Certificate

2. What is the nature/ purpose of the proposed certificate? Please include a brief (1-2 sentence) description of the academic field in this certificate.

The Rural Health Certificate aims to prepare students to address the unique healthcare needs of rural and underserved communities by providing specialized knowledge and skills. The purpose is to equip students with expertise in rural health disparities, healthcare delivery in resource-limited settings, and innovative solutions such as telehealth, positioning them to work effectively in these environments.

3. If you do not have a major in this field, explain how the proposed certificate relates to your university mission and strategic plan, and to the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2022-2027.

SDBOR Policy 1.2.5 states South Dakota State University's mission is to offer academic programs in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, home economics, business economics, nursing, and pharmacy. The nature of the Rural Health Certificate fits within the statutory mission of South Dakota State University. SDSU is currently authorized to deliver majors in nursing, pharmacy, medical laboratory science, community and public health, and nutrition and dietetics.

Alignment of the Rural Health Certificate with SDSU's mission and strategic plan:

- *Achieve Excellence through Transformative Education:* The rural health certificate supports SDSU's mission by offering a transformative educational experience that equips students with the specialized knowledge and skills needed to address the unique challenges of rural healthcare. By developing this undergraduate certificate, SDSU provides students with an academic pathway that prepares them for future healthcare careers in rural settings or in caring for rural populations, aligning with the university's commitment to excellence in education and student success.

Alignment of the Rural Health Certificate with the South Dakota Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2022-2027:

- *Goal 3: Academic Excellence, Student Outcomes, Educational Attainment:* The Rural Health Certificate enhances academic excellence by integrating interdisciplinary learning focused on rural healthcare trends, policy, and practice. It directly improves student outcomes by equipping graduates with specialized skills that make them more competitive in the job market, particularly for positions in underserved rural areas. The certificate also contributes to educational attainment by offering students a focused credential that supports their career aspirations in the growing field of rural health.
- *Goal 4: Workforce and Economic Development:* This certificate addresses the critical need for healthcare professionals in rural communities by preparing students to meet workforce demands specific to these populations. As SDSU prepares future healthcare workers, this certificate ensures that rural health remains a central focus, aligning with workforce and economic development priorities by addressing the healthcare provider shortage in rural areas, fostering economic stability, and improving access to healthcare in underserved regions.

4. Provide a justification for the certificate program, including the potential benefits to students and potential workforce demand for those who graduate with the credential.

Rural communities face persistent health disparities, including higher rates of chronic illness, lower life expectancy, and limited access to healthcare services due to provider shortages and geographic isolation.¹ An undergraduate rural health certificate would provide students with specialized training on rural healthcare delivery, preparing them to address these unique challenges. Programs like this can enhance healthcare delivery in underserved areas and promote health equity by focusing on the specific needs of rural populations.

The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has identified significant workforce shortages in rural areas, particularly for primary care providers and nurses. According to HRSA, rural areas have fewer healthcare professionals per capita than urban areas, which affects access to timely and specialized care.² Graduates with a rural health

¹ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/rural-health-disparities>

² <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/workforce-shortages>

certificate would be more competitive in the job market as they will have training that aligns with the distinct needs of rural healthcare settings, such as managing multiple roles, addressing health resource shortages, and utilizing telehealth. Nursing and other healthcare students who obtain a rural health certificate would be better positioned to enter the workforce in rural settings, where demand for healthcare professionals is high. Additionally, the certificate could enhance opportunities for further education, such as advanced nursing degrees or public health programs focused on rural health.

Federal initiatives frequently offer loan repayment programs and scholarships to healthcare professionals who commit to working in underserved areas, including rural regions.³ Furthermore, national and state governments are increasing their focus on rural health through funding and policy initiatives aimed at improving access to care in these areas.^{4, 5} A rural health certificate aligns with these policy goals, helping institutions produce graduates who are qualified to fill critical rural healthcare roles.

An undergraduate rural health certificate would prepare students for employment in high-demand rural settings, address healthcare disparities in these communities, and respond to national policy goals aimed at improving access to care in underserved areas.

5. Who is the intended audience for the certificate program (including but not limited to the majors/degree programs from which students are expected)?

The certificate is recommended for undergraduate students in nursing or other health-related degree programs, however, open to students from any major.

6. Certificate Design

A. Is the certificate designed as a stand-alone education credential option for students not seeking additional credentials (i.e., a bachelor's or master's degree)? If so, what areas of high workforce demand or specialized body of knowledge will be addressed through this certificate?

This certificate is not intended as a stand-alone credential.

B. Is the certificate a value added credential that supplements a student's major field of study? If so, list the majors/programs from which students would most benefit from adding the certificate.

Yes. The certificate would be a value-added credential to students enrolled in Nursing, Pharmacy, Medical Laboratory Science, Community and Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics and pre-professional interest areas (Pre-Chiropractic, Pre-Dental, Pre-Medicine, Pre-Occupational Therapy, Pre-Optometry, Pre-Physical Therapy, Pre-Physician Assistant).

C. Is the certificate a stackable credential with credits that apply to a higher level credential (i.e., associate, bachelor's, or master's degree)? If so, indicate the program(s) to which the certificate stacks and the number of credits from the certificate that can be applied to the program.

³ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/scholarships-loans-loan-repayment>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10060738/>

⁵ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/organizations/federal-agencies>

This certificate is not intended as a stackable credential. Students will be able to apply the 11 credits towards their major requirements and available electives.

7. List the courses required for completion of the certificate in the table below (if any new courses are proposed for the certificate, please attach the new course requests to this form).

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course <i>Include credits for prerequisites in subtotal below.</i>	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
HSC	212	Contemporary Health Problems	None	2	No
HSC	402	Rural Healthcare Matters	None	3	No
HSC	410	Current Rural Healthcare Trends	HSC 402	3	Yes
HSC	452	Interprofessional Issues in Healthcare	None	3	No
Subtotal				11	

8. Student Outcome and Demonstration of Individual Achievement.

A. What specific knowledge and competencies, including technology competencies, will all students demonstrate before graduation?

By graduation, students who complete the Rural Health Certificate will have the knowledge and competencies needed to effectively deliver healthcare in rural settings, work with cutting-edge health technologies, and address the unique challenges facing rural populations, including the following student learning outcomes:

1. Students will identify and analyze the social, economic, and environmental factors contributing to health disparities in rural populations and discuss strategies to address these challenges.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of rural healthcare delivery models, including the use of telehealth, mobile clinics, and interdisciplinary care teams, to improve access and quality of care in rural communities.
3. Students will exhibit cultural awareness by recognizing the diverse needs and values of rural populations, including considerations of socioeconomic status, geography, and local customs, in delivering patient-centered care.
4. Students will discuss ways the interprofessional team collaborates to promote healthy outcomes in rural communities through interdisciplinary approaches.
5. Students will assess ethical issues specific to rural healthcare, such as patient privacy, resource allocation, and professional isolation, and formulate ethical solutions grounded in patient advocacy and community needs.

a. Complete the table below to list specific learning outcomes – knowledge and competencies – for courses in the proposed program in each row.

Individual Student Outcome	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes			
	HSC 212	HSC 402	HSC 410	HSC 452
1. Students will identify the social, economic, and environmental factors contributing to health disparities in rural populations and discuss strategies to address these challenges.	X	X	X	

Individual Student Outcome	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes			
	HSC 212	HSC 402	HSC 410	HSC 452
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of rural healthcare delivery models, including the use of telehealth, mobile clinics, and interdisciplinary care teams, to improve access and quality of care in rural communities.			X	
3. Students will exhibit cultural awareness by recognizing the diverse needs and values of rural populations, including considerations of socioeconomic status, geography, and local customs, in delivering patient-centered care.			X	X
4. Students will discuss ways the interprofessional team collaborates to promote healthy outcomes in rural communities through interdisciplinary approaches.			X	X
5. Students will assess ethical issues specific to rural healthcare, such as patient privacy, resource allocation, and professional isolation, and formulate ethical solutions grounded in patient advocacy and community needs.		X		X

9. Delivery Location.

A. Complete the following charts to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver the entire program on campus, at any off campus location (e.g., USD Community College for Sioux Falls, Black Hills State University-Rapid City, Capital City Campus, etc.) or deliver the entire program through distance technology (e.g., as an on-line program)?

	Yes/No	Intended Start Date
On campus	Yes	2025-2026 Academic Year

	Yes/No	If Yes, list location(s)	Intended Start Date
Off campus	No		

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods <i>Delivery methods are defined in AAC Guideline 2.4.3.B.</i>	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	Yes	015 - Online Asynchronous 018 - Online Synchronous	2025-2026 Academic Year
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	No	If yes, identify institutions:	

B. Complete the following chart to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver more than 50% but less than 100% of the certificate through distance learning (e.g., as an on-line program)? This question responds to HLC definitions for distance delivery.

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	No		

Appendix A
Corresponding Curriculum Requests – New Course Requests



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New Course Request

SDSU	Nursing	
Institution	Division/Department	
Dennis D. Hedge		10/22/2024
Institutional Approval Signature		Date

Section 1. Course Title and Description

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Credits
HSC 410	Current Rural Healthcare Trends	3

Course Description
This course provides a comprehensive overview of the dynamic landscape of rural healthcare. Students will explore the unique challenges and opportunities facing healthcare providers and communities in rural areas.

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Pre-Req/Co-Req?
HSC 402	Rural Healthcare Matters	Pre-Req

Registration Restrictions

None

Section 2. Review of Course

2.1. Will this be a unique or common course?

Unique Course

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Credits
HSC 402	Rural Healthcare Matters	3
FAMP 857	Rural Health/Interprofessional Collaboration	4

Provide explanation of differences between proposed course and existing system catalog courses below:

HSC 402 provides an introductory focus on rural healthcare, however, the proposed course takes a more in-depth look at the issues facing healthcare providers and communities.

FAMP 857 is a clinical course for medical students.

Section 3. Other Course Information

3.1. Are there instructional staffing impacts?

No. Schedule Management, explain below: This new course will be initially offered every spring, alternating with other HSC courses. If needed, it will be offered more frequently.

3.2. Existing program(s) in which course will be offered: Rural Health Certificate

3.3. Proposed instructional method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 5.4): D - Discussion

3.4. Proposed delivery method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 5.5): 015 - Online Asynchronous, 018 - Online Synchronous

3.5. Term change will be effective: Fall 2025

3.6. Can students repeat the course for additional credit? Yes, total credit limit: No

- 3.7. Will grade for this course be limited to S/U (pass/fail)? Yes No
- 3.8. Will section enrollment be capped? Yes, max per section: No
- 3.9. Will this course equate (i.e., be considered the same course for degree completion) with any other unique or common courses in the common course system database in Colleague and the Course Inventory Report? Yes No
- 3.10. Is this prefix approved for your university? Yes No

Section 4. Department and Course Codes (Completed by University Academic Affairs)

- 4.1. University Department: Nursing
- 4.2. Banner Department Code: SNUR
- 4.3. Proposed CIP Code: 51.2201

Is this a new CIP code for the university? Yes No

NEW COURSE REQUEST
Supporting Justification for On-Campus Review

Heidi Mennenga	Heidi Mennenga	9/6/2024
Request Originator	Signature	Date
Heidi Mennenga	Heidi Mennenga	9/6/2024
Department Chair	Signature	Date
Mary Anne Krogh	Mary Anne Krogh	9/6/2024
School/College Dean	Signature	Date

- Provide specific reasons for the proposal of this course and explain how the changes enhance the curriculum.
 This course will be included in the proposed Rural Health Certificate. Intended for a variety of students, including those in healthcare-related majors, this course will focus on specific challenges and opportunities facing healthcare providers and communities in rural areas.
- Note whether this course is: Required Elective
- In addition to the major/program in which this course is offered, what other majors/programs will be affected by this course?
 None.
- If this will be a dual listed course, indicate how the distinction between the two levels will be made.
 N/A
- Desired section size 30
- Provide qualifications of faculty who will teach this course. List name(s), rank(s), and degree(s).
 Theresa Garren-Grubbs, Clinical Assistant Professor, DNP
 Danielle Currier, Instructor, MSN
- Note whether adequate facilities are available and list any special equipment needed for the course.
 No special equipment is needed and the course is online so no impact on facilities.
- Note whether adequate library and media support are available for the course.
 Current library and media support is adequate for the course.
- Will the new course duplicate courses currently being offered on this campus? Yes No
- If this course may be offered for variable credit, explain how the amount of credit at each offering is to be determined.
 N/A