



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

New Baccalaureate Degree Minor

UNIVERSITY:	SDSU
TITLE OF PROPOSED MINOR:	Bison Studies
DEGREE(S) IN WHICH MINOR MAY BE EARNED:	Any
EXISTING RELATED MAJORS OR MINORS:	Animal Science (B.S.) - Food Animal Health Specialization; Animal Science (B.S.) - Industry Relations Specialization; Animal Science (B.S.) - Production Management Specialization; Animal Science (B.S.) - Science Specialization; Ecology and Environmental Science (B.S.) - Rangeland Ecology & Management Specialization
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	Fall 2025
PROPOSED CIP CODE:	01.0999
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	Animal Science
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	SANS
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences
BANNER DIVISION CODE:	3F

Please check this box to confirm that:

- The individual preparing this request has read [AAC Guideline 2.3.2.2.D](#), which pertains to new baccalaureate degree minor 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.

President of the University

2-4-2025

Date

- 1. Do you have a major in this field?** Yes No
- 2. If you do not have a major in this field, explain how the proposed minor relates to your university mission and strategic plan, and to the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020.**

The bison studies program will support South Dakota State University's mission, as outlined in SDBOR Policy 1.2.5, by offering academic programs in the liberal arts and sciences as well as professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, home economics, business economics, nursing, and pharmacy. Bison are a species that falls underneath the facets of both animal science and natural resources, which are both housed in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences at SDSU. Bison studies is a growing field in academia, and South Dakota State University is uniquely positioned to utilize its existing resources to offer this program. The education, training, internship opportunities, and research derived from the program fall within the land grant university's mission by providing education in a growing field in these sectors. This minor provides students with opportunities to use this knowledge to serve this industry in future service and research. By housing the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies, two dedicated bison faculty, and as the official research partner with the largest bison producer in the world (Turner Enterprises), SDSU has strategically placed itself at the forefront of bison research and teaching capabilities. This minor will capitalize on these relationships by offering a unique field of study that will inevitably draw more students. The proposed minor aligns with Goal 4, Workforce and Economic Development, of the SDBOR strategic plan by providing an enhanced undergraduate opportunity that aligns with a need for a greater workforce in the growing bison industry in South Dakota and the nation. Similarly, the proposed minor aligns with the SDSU Strategic Plan goal to Achieve Excellence Through Transformative Education as it is a unique and innovative undergraduate program with an emphasis on workforce and economic development of the growing bison industry.

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

This minor will prepare students to enter the field of bison production and management by exploring habitat management techniques, animal husbandry, basic veterinary care, and the importance of bison to North American culture. The purpose of this minor is to develop students in the field of bison studies so that they may work with private industry, natural resource management, or tribal nations.

Bison production has reached an all-time high in the United States since the era of market hunting. Bison meat has entered the US meat industry market share and gains more of that share every year. Bison producers now encompass every state in the continental US, and there is a need for the producers to be supported by academics and professionals. The minor will help generate students that will enter the workforce to give detailed support to the producers in their daily management, feeding, and production of bison. It will also give students the ability to enter the bison production system themselves and raise bison for profit or in their home tribes as cultural herds.

- 4. How will the proposed minor benefit students?**

Bison production is becoming more and more relevant as consumer demand for healthier meat products increases. With this rapid growth of animals, producers, and production types, students who wish to enter this workforce will need an educational path that provides

information and experiences unique to the bison industry to expand their future career success. The proposed minor includes specialized coursework and application in bison studies to prepare students for positions in this growing industry.

- 5. Describe the workforce demand for graduates in related fields, including national demand and demand within South Dakota.** *Provide data and examples; data sources may include but are not limited to the South Dakota Department of Labor, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Regental system dashboards, etc. Please cite any sources in a footnote.*

Bison production has reached an all-time high in the United States since the era of market hunting. The estimated herd size in the United States is approximately 400,000¹, with 192,477 of those animals owned in private herds located in 1,986 private ranches across the US.¹ Bison meat has entered the US meat industry market share and gains more of that share every year, currently earning premium prices compared to beef.² Bison producers now encompass every state in the continental US, and there is a need for the producers to be supported by academics and professionals. This minor will help generate students that will enter the workforce to give detailed support to the producers in their daily management, feeding, and production of bison. While there is not a full market assessment of bison-related positions available, there are multiple positions for persons specifically with bison related skills at both the Turner Enterprise for Ecoagriculture and the National Bison Association.^{1,3} This minor also gives students the ability to enter the bison production system themselves and raise bison for profit, or in their home tribes as cultural herds. Students will also have added value in the field of wildlife and fisheries science/natural resource management as park biologists, managers, zookeepers, and experts in the field of wildlife conservation.

- 6. Provide estimated enrollments and completions in the table below and explain the methodology used in developing the estimates.**

	Fiscal Years*			
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
<i>Estimates</i>	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	FY 29
Students enrolled in the minor (fall)	10	15	25	35
Completions by graduates	0	5	10	25

*Do not include current fiscal year.

The Department of Animal Science anticipates student enrollment in the minor in year one at 10 students and growing to 35 students by year four. Estimated enrollments are based on enrollment in two special topics courses (Introduction to Bison Management and Current Issues in Bison Industry) and student feedback. In fall 2024, there were 27 students enrolled in Current Issues in Bison Industry. In spring 2025, another special topics course, Introduction to Bison Management, will be offered and currently has enrolled 21 students. Enrollment in these bison-focused courses signals that there is strong interest in the field.

- 7. What is the rationale for the curriculum? Demonstrate/provide evidence that the curriculum is consistent with current national standards.**

The Center of Excellence for Bison Studies (CoE) was established at SDSU in 2021. Prior to and since its creation, it identified a strategic niche that SDSU could utilize by working with

¹ National Bison Association. <https://bisoncentral.com/bison-by-the-numbers/>

² USDA. https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2827.pdf

³ Tedturner.com

bison producers across the Midwest and United States. Through the Center’s and the University’s efforts, SDSU is now at the forefront of the bison industry. This curriculum will reinforce this position by being the only land grant university to offer a bison-specific minor.

Curriculum was determined through collaboration with the CoE, Department of Animal Science (AS), and the Department of Natural Resource Management (NRM). The bison specific courses form the core of the curriculum. AS 101-101L or WL 220 provide general principles in animal care and range management that are necessary to begin more in-depth studies specific to the species of bison and thus are required prerequisites. Bison are a range dominant species, thus knowledge of principles of range management are necessary for successful bison production. The requirement of an internship/research/field experience credit is justified by the heavy emphasis potential employers (e.g. Turner Enterprises) place on prior experiential learning with bison. The remaining elective courses offer opportunities to learn about various production systems including intensive management or a stronger focus on conservation and range management.

8. Complete the tables below. Explain any exceptions to Board policy requested.

Minors by design are limited in the number of credit hours required for completion. Minors typically consist of eighteen (18) credit hours, including prerequisite courses. In addition, minors typically involve existing courses. If the curriculum consists of more than eighteen (18) credit hours (including prerequisites) or new courses, please provide explanation and justification below.

A. Distribution of Credit Hours

Bison Studies Minor	Credit Hours	Percent
Requirements in minor	13 - 14	67%
Electives in minor	4 -5	33%
Total	18	100%

B. Required Courses in the Minor

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
AS OR WL	101-101L 220	Introduction to Animal Science and Laboratory (3, 1 cr.) Introduction to Wildlife & Fisheries Management (3 cr.)	None	3-4	No
AS	231	Introduction to Bison Management	AS 101-101L or WL 220	3	Yes
AS	431	Advanced Bison Production	AS 231	3	Yes
RANG	205	Introduction to Range Management	None	2	No
RANG	205L	Introduction to Range Management Lab	None	1	No
		Select one of the following:			
AS	494	Internship	AS 101 or AS 104	1	No
AS	498	Research	None	1	No
NRM	494	Internship	None	1	No
NRM	496	Field Experience	None	1	No
NRM	498	Research	None	1	No

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
Subtotal				13-14	

C. Elective Courses in the Minor: List courses available as electives in the program. Indicate any proposed new courses added specifically for the minor.

Select 4-5 credits from the following list.

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
AGEC	271	Farm and Ranch Management	None	3	No
AS / RANG	215	Introduction to Integrated Ranch Management	None	3	No
AS	264	Ruminant Livestock Production	None	3	No
AS	494	Internship	AS 101 or AS 104	1-2	No
AS	498	Research	None	1-2	No
NRM	494	Internship	None	1-2	No
NRM	496	Field Experience	None	1-2	No
NRM	498	Research	None	1-2	No
RANG	321	Wildland Ecosystems	None	3	No
RANG	374	Habitat Conservation and Management	None	3	No
RANG	374L	Habitat Conservation and Management Lab	None	1	No
VET	403	Animal Diseases and Their Control	None	3	No

Students will be required to choose electives that do not overlap with requirements in their major.

9. What are the learning outcomes expected for all students who complete the minor? How will students achieve these outcomes?

After completion of this minor, students will be able to:

- Describe and demonstrate basic animal husbandry techniques and strategies
- Utilize marketing principles as they apply to bison, bison products and associated value-added opportunities.
- Conduct in depth analysis of habitat management and practices for bison production, including basic plant and soil characteristics applicable to range and grazing management.
- Develop grazing practices that fit individual models/persons.
- Employ and interpret common methods and techniques of population management.
- Develop advanced skills in bison production that are specific to Natural Resource Management or Animal Science.

Individual Student Outcome	AS 101L-101L or WL 220*	AS 231*	AS 431*	RANG 205*	AGEC 271	AS / RANG 215	AS 264	AS 494, AS 496, AS 498, NRM 494, NRM 496, NRM 498	RANG 321	RANG 374-374L	VET 403
Describe and demonstrate basic	X	X	X								

Individual Student Outcome	AS 101L-101L or WL 220*	AS 231*	AS 431*	RANG 205*	AGEC 271	AS / RANG 215	AS 264	AS 494, AS 496, AS 498, NRM 494, NRM 496, NRM 498	RANG 321	RANG 374-374L	VET 403
animal husbandry techniques and strategies.											
Utilize marketing principles as they apply to bison, bison products and associated value-added opportunities.		X	X		X						
Conduct in depth analysis of habitat management and practices for bison production including basic plant and soil characteristics applicable to range and grazing management.		X	X	X							
Develop grazing practices that fit individual models/producers.			X	X							
Employ and interpret common methods and techniques of population management.	X	X	X								
Develop advanced skills in bison production that are specific to Natural Resource Management or Animal Science.			X			X	X	X	X	X	X

**Required Courses*

10. What instructional approaches and technologies will instructors use to teach courses in the minor? *This refers to the instructional technologies and approaches used to teach courses and NOT the technology applications and approaches expected of students.*

Instructional approaches will include face-to-face lectures and hands-on activities. In the bison specific courses, field trips will also be utilized to obtain hands-on interactions with live bison. This will be completed at either Custer State Park in conjunction with their annual round up or at Bad River Ranch owned by Turner Enterprises in Ft. Pierre, SD.

11. Delivery Location

Note: The accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) require Board approval for a university to offer programs off-campus and through distance delivery.

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 Center 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 online program)?

	Yes/No	Intended Start Date
On campus	Yes	Fall 2025

	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)	No		
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 minor through distance learning (e.g., as an online 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		

12. Does the University request any exceptions to any Board policy for this minor? Explain any requests for exceptions to Board Policy. If not requesting any exceptions, enter "None."

None.

13. Cost, Budget, and Resources: Explain the amount and source(s) of any one-time and continuing investments in personnel, professional development, release time, time redirected from other assignments, instructional technology & software, other operations and maintenance, facilities, etc., needed to implement the proposed minor. Address off-campus or distance delivery separately.

SDSU does not request new state resources. Bison Studies is a growing field in academia, and South Dakota State University is uniquely positioned to utilize its existing resources to offer

this course. By housing the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies, two dedicated bison faculty, and as the official research partner with the largest bison producer in the world (Turner Enterprises), SDSU has strategically placed itself at the forefront of bison research and teaching capabilities.

14. New Course Approval: New courses required to implement the new minor may receive approval in conjunction with program approval or receive approval separately. Please check the appropriate statement.

YES, the university is seeking approval of new courses related to the proposed program in conjunction with program approval. All New Course Request forms are included as Appendix C and match those described in section 7.

NO, the university is not seeking approval of all new courses related to the proposed program in conjunction with program approval; the institution will submit new course approval requests separately or at a later date in accordance with Academic Affairs Guidelines.

Appendix A
Corresponding Curriculum Requests – New Course Requests



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS

New Course Request

SDSU	College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences / Animal Science
Institution	Division/Department
Dennis D. Hedge	2/3/2025
Institutional Approval Signature	Date

Section 1. Course Title and Description

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Credits
AS 231	Introduction to Bison Management	3

Course Description
The introductory course provides the foundations of bison management and production theory. This course will focus on the discussion of various principles that are necessary to understand before utilizing field work in relation to bison.

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Pre-Req/Co-Req?
AS 101-101L OR WL 220	Introduction to Animal Science & Lab Introduction to Wildlife & Fisheries Management	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
WL 220	Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries Management	3
AS 264	Ruminant Livestock Production	3

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

The proposed course is specific to bison production and management and will focus only on that species. WL 220 is a broad-based course that covers multiple species of wildlife and fish, with a maximum of one or two lectures that directly relate to bison production. Similarly, AS 264 covers livestock species of beef cattle, sheep and goats, and currently has no lectures specifically focused on bison. Although some principles (e.g. digestive systems, grass management) from these courses are broad enough to have some application to bison production, that is not the focus of either course.

Section 3. Other Course Information

3.1. Are there instructional staffing impacts?

No. Schedule Management, explain below: This course will be part of the workload of an existing faculty member. This class is currently being taught as a Topics course. AS 231 will be

taught once per year in the spring semester.

3.2. Existing program(s) in which course will be offered: Bison Studies Certificate, Bison Studies Minor

3.3. Proposed instructional method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 2.4.3.A): R - Lecture

3.4. Proposed delivery method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 2.4.3.B and 2.4.3.B(A-1)): 001 - Face to Face

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: Animal Science

4.2. Banner Department Code: SANS

4.3. Proposed CIP Code: 01.0901

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

**NEW COURSE REQUEST
Supporting Justification for On-Campus Review**

Rosie Nold	Rosie Nold	12/10/2024
Request Originator	Signature	Date
John R Jaeger	John R Jaeger	12/10/2024
Department Chair	Signature	Date
James Connors	James Connors	12/10/2024
School/College Dean	Signature	Date

1. Provide specific reasons for the proposal of this course and explain how the changes enhance the curriculum.

Bison Studies is a growing field in academia, and South Dakota State University is uniquely positioned to utilize its existing resources to offer this course. By housing the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies, two dedicated bison faculty, and as the official research partner with the largest bison producer in the world (Turner Enterprises), SDSU has strategically placed itself at the forefront of bison research and teaching capabilities. This course will capitalize on these relationships by offering a unique field of study that will inevitably draw more students into undergraduate and graduate populations. By offering this course to students in numerous majors at SDSU, they will be better equipped to service the needs of the bison industry, whether their career paths take them into private industry, public management, or tribal relations. The proposed course will provide students an introduction to all aspects of the bison industry including animal management, health and nutrition, grazing management, and marketing, thus providing students a broad knowledge that enhances their ability to enter any aspect of the industry.

2. Note whether this course is: Required Elective

3. In addition to the major/program in which this course is offered, what other majors/programs will be affected by this course?

This course may be an elective for any student; however, it may be of interest to students in the Animal Science Department, Natural Resource Management Department, and School of American and Global Studies. Applicable programs include all Animal Science specializations, Ecology and Environmental

Science – Rangeland Ecology and Management Specialization, Conservation Planning and Park Management, Wildlife and Fisheries Science, and American Indian and Indigenous Studies.

4. If this will be a dual listed course, indicate how the distinction between the two levels will be made.
N/A
5. Desired section size 30
6. Provide qualifications of faculty who will teach this course. List name(s), rank(s), and degree(s).
Philip Urso, Assistant Professor, Ph.D.
7. Note whether adequate facilities are available and list any special equipment needed for the course.
Adequate facilities to teach this course successfully are present at SDSU. Current plans include a partnership with SDSU, Custer State Park, and Bad River Ranches (Turner Enterprises). This partnership will work in tandem with bison round ups to get students hands on experiences working with animals.
8. Note whether adequate library and media support are available for the course.
Library and media support is available and more than adequate for this course.
9. Will the new course duplicate courses currently being offered on this campus? Yes No
10. If this course may be offered for variable credit, explain how the amount of credit at each offering is to be determined.
N/A



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

New Course Request

SDSU	College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences / Animal Science
Institution	Division/Department
Dennis D. Hedge	2/3/2025
Institutional Approval Signature	Date

Section 1. Course Title and Description

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Credits
AS 431-531	Advanced Bison Production	3

Course Description

An in-depth course focusing on bison management and production techniques specific to bison. Intensive, governmental, and tribal production systems will be thoroughly explored.

AS 431 Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Pre-Req/Co-Req?
AS 231	Introduction to Bison Management	Pre-req

AS 431 Registration Restrictions

Junior or Senior standing only

Section 2. Review of Course

2.1. Will this be a unique or common course?

Unique Course

Prefix & No.	Course Title	Credits
WL 411-411L	Principles of Wildlife Management and Lab	2, 1
AS 474-474L	Cow-Calf Management and Lab	2, 1

Provide explanation of differences between proposed course and existing system catalog

courses below:

The proposed course is specific to bison production and management and will focus only on that species. WL 411-411L is a broad-based course that covers multiple species of wild birds, mammals and herps, with a maximum of one or two lectures that directly relate to bison production. Similarly, AS 474-474L is specific to cow-calf production and currently has no lectures specifically focused on bison. Although some principles (e.g. digestive systems, grass management) from these courses are broad enough to have some application to bison production, that is not the focus of either course.

Section 3. Other Course Information

3.1. Are there instructional staffing impacts?

No. Schedule Management, explain below: Workload is available to teach this course. AS 431-531 will be taught once per year in the fall semester.

3.2. Existing program(s) in which course will be offered: Bison Studies Certificate, Bison Studies Minor

3.3. Proposed instructional method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 2.4.3.A): R - Lecture

3.4. Proposed delivery method by university (as defined by AAC Guideline 2.4.3.B and 2.4.3.B(A-1)): 001 - Face to Face

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: Animal Science

4.2. Banner Department Code: SANS

4.3. Proposed CIP Code: 01.0901

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

**NEW COURSE REQUEST
Supporting Justification for On-Campus Review**

Rosie Nold	Rosie Nold	12/10/2024
Request Originator	Signature	Date
John R Jaeger	John R Jaeger	12/10/2024
Department Chair	Signature	Date
James Connors	James Connors	12/10/2024
School/College Dean	Signature	Date

1. Provide specific reasons for the proposal of this course and explain how the changes enhance the curriculum.

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course to students in numerous majors at SDSU, they will be better equipped to service the needs of the bison industry, whether their career paths take them into private industry, public management, or tribal relations. The proposed course will provide students with in-depth study of all aspects of bison production including animal management, health and nutrition, grazing management, and marketing, thus providing students technical expertise to make them sought after employees for many aspects of the bison industry.

2. Note whether this course is: Required Elective

3. In addition to the major/program in which this course is offered, what other majors/programs will be affected by this course?

This course may be an elective for any student; however, it may be of interest to students in the Animal Science Department, Natural Resource Management Department and School of American and Global Studies. Applicable programs include all Animal Science specializations, Ecology and Environmental Science – Rangeland Ecology and Management Specialization, Conservation Planning and Park Management, Wildlife and Fisheries Science, and American Indian and Indigenous Studies.

4. If this will be a dual listed course, indicate how the distinction between the two levels will be made. Graduate students enrolling in AS 531 will be subjected to an additional assignment which includes an academic style presentation to be presented to the full class. This presentation may be inclusive of their research or industry topics as assigned.

5. Desired section size 25

6. Provide qualifications of faculty who will teach this course. List name(s), rank(s), and degree(s). Philip Urso, Assistant Professor, Ph.D.

7. Note whether adequate facilities are available and list any special equipment needed for the course. Adequate facilities to teach this course successfully are present at SDSU. Current plans include a partnership with SDSU, Custer State Park, and Bad River Ranches (Turner Enterprises). This partnership will work in tandem with bison round ups to get students hands on experiences working with animals.

8. Note whether adequate library and media support are available for the course.

Library and media support is available and more than adequate for this course.

9. Will the new course duplicate courses currently being offered on this campus? Yes No

10. If this course may be offered for variable credit, explain how the amount of credit at each offering is to be determined.

N/A