

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs
Consent

AGENDA ITEM: 5 – I (2)

DATE: May 9, 2023

SUBJECT

Request to Seek Accreditation – BHSU (CASCE)

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 1:10](#) – Relationship of Curriculum and Instruction to Statutory Objectives

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Board of Regents Policy 1:10 specifies that “Each campus must seek and receive Board approval before applying for initial accreditation or an expanded scope of accreditation for academic programs.” In accordance with Board policy, South Dakota State University requests approval to seek accreditation from the following accrediting agencies:

Accrediting Agency: Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE)

Program: Exercise Science (BS)

Advantages: The national Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) exam is required for graduates entering the workforce as a strength and conditioning trainer or coach. The CSCS exam is overseen by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) which, in turn, recognizes the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) as the accrediting agency.

By 2030, only graduates of programs accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education will be eligible to take the CSCS exam. BHSU’s Exercise Science major needs to earn this accreditation to continue to prepare students to take this exam.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, awards institutional accreditation for higher education institutions in South Dakota. A variety of unique organizations award specialized/program accreditation within distinct programs or departments at Regental institutions. A general

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20230509_5-I(2):

I move to approve BHSU’s request to seek accreditation from the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education for their BS in Exercise Science.

reference document on institutional and specialized/program accreditation is available on the BOR website at the link below.

- [Special Analysis: Accreditation in Higher Education](#)

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

BHSU anticipates a one-time application fee of \$1,000 for initial accreditation, and an annual fee of \$1,000 to be covered through department funds. Other costs would include roughly \$3,000 for travel expenses for the site visit.

Board staff recommends approval.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – BHSU Request to Seek Accreditation Form: Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE)

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Request to Seek Accreditation Under BOR Policy

1. Institution: Black Hills State University

2. Program(s) seeking accreditation: Exercise Science

3. Level of program(s) involved in accreditation:

Certificate	Master's Degree
Associate Degree	Doctoral Degree
x Bachelor's Degree	

4. Accrediting Agency: Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE)

5. What are the advantages of accreditation?

The national Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) exam is required for graduates entering the workforce as a strength and conditioning trainer or coach. The CSCS exam is overseen by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) which, in turn, recognizes the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) as the accrediting agency.

By 2030, only graduates of programs accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education will be eligible to take the CSCS exam. BHSU's Exercise Science major needs to earn this accreditation to continue to prepare students to take this exam.

The Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education establishes the standards and guidelines for postsecondary programs that prepare students to be strength and conditioning specialists. At BHSU, this is the undergraduate Exercise Science major that prepares graduates to take the Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) exam which then enables graduates to enter careers in fitness and strength and conditioning.

- A. *Accreditation through CASCE will improve the Exercise Science Program at BHSU.* Students who earn a degree from a CASCE accredited program receive a quality education in each of the essentials of strength and conditioning outlined by the National Strength and Conditioning Association for a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist. The National Strength and Conditioning Association is recognized as the leader in the field of strength, conditioning, and fitness.
- B. *Students graduating with a CASCE certified degree will be recognized for completing a rigorous, comprehensive education in exercise science.* This national recognition will provide our students with an advantage when applying for a wide variety of exercise science-related positions, graduate programs, or professional programs. The prestige associated with a CASCE-certified degree is recognized by employers and graduate admission committees; as a result, BHSU students will have a competitive advantage.

- C. *Gaining CASCE approval will allow the exercise science program to become more competitive in attracting the most talented students.* Having a certified program will make BHSU more attractive to these highly qualified students, especially those interested in studying at a small liberal arts institution, and will improve the quality of students coming to our program. Additionally, approval will enhance our ability to recruit international students, as CASCE-certified degrees are recognized worldwide. Once accredited, the BHSU Exercise Science program will be included in a searchable database of CASCE-approved programs.
- D. *Meeting CASCE certification requirements will greatly improve the exercise science program.* In order to meet the standards of a CASCE-certified degree, BHSU will adjust learning objectives to follow the essentials of strength and conditioning outlined by the National Strength and Conditioning Association for a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist.
- E. *CASCE certification increases the quality of the exercise science education given to students with other majors and minors.* Exercise science is a significant component of other scientific disciplines taught at BHSU, including Physical Education majors and Coaching minors, and provides essential scientific education for pre-health-professional students. A stronger, more comprehensive exercise science program significantly improves the background that is built for students in these other fields and strengthens education in all areas of science, not just exercise science. This will prepare BHSU students to make more informed, scientifically justified decisions when dealing with issues pertaining to health and fitness.

6. What are the anticipated costs involved in accreditation, including:

- A) Costs involved in undergoing self-study and preparing the application for accreditation.
- CASCE has an initial institutional application fee of \$1000.
 - Once accredited, CASCE has an annual institutional fee of \$1000.
 - The CASCE has an initial accreditation fee of \$5000.

B) Out-of-pocket costs related to dues or site visits.

- The out-of-pocket costs for accreditation must cover expenses associated with the on-site review. The CASCE estimates on-site review costs to be between \$1,500 and \$2,000. To ensure adequate funding is available for the on-site review, the Exercise Science department estimates the cost associated with the on-site review to be no more than \$3,000. The site visit is a one-time occurrence and must take place within one year of submitting the application for accreditation.

C) Base budget implications including incremental costs and minimum base resources required (dollars and FTE).

- There is currently no minimum faculty requirement outlined by CASCE accreditation standards. Our current student to faculty ratio within exercise science is adequate to achieve accreditation. Our program has sufficient laboratory space to ensure students receive instruction in line with the knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined in the essentials of strength and conditioning outlined by the National Strength and Conditioning Association for a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist.

7. What is the source of the resources needed?

The School of Behavioral Science and the College of Education and Behavioral Science support the decision to seek accreditation. Both the school and the college will allocate funds as available to assist with the cost of accreditation. The exercise science department has adequate funds coming from the exercise science disciple fee which will help cover the cost of accreditation.

8. What is the estimated date for submission of accreditation application?

December 1st, 2023

Institutional Authorization (President)