

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs
Consent

AGENDA ITEM: 7 – D (1)

DATE: June 21-22, 2023

SUBJECT

New Program Request – DSU – Minor in Communication Studies

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 2:23](#) – New Programs, Program Modifications, Curricular Requests, and Inactivation/Termination

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Dakota State University (DSU) requests authorization to offer a minor in Communication Studies. The Communication Studies minor will replace the current Speech Communication/Theatre Minor, modernizing DSU’s efforts to help students become competent and effective communicators in many situations: public speaking, interpersonal relationships, small groups, organizational communication, intercultural, and leadership.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

DSU plans to offer the minor in Communication Studies on campus and online. DSU does not request new state resources, and no new courses are required. DSU estimates 8 students enrolled and 3 graduates by the fourth year of the program.

Board office staff recommends approval.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – New Program Request Form: DSU – Minor in Communication Studies

DRAFT MOTION 20230621_7-D(1):

I move to authorize DSU to offer a minor in Communication Studies, as presented.



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

New Baccalaureate Degree Minor

UNIVERSITY:	DSU
TITLE OF PROPOSED MINOR:	Communication Studies
DEGREE(S) IN WHICH MINOR MAY BE EARNED:	Bachelor of Science
EXISTING RELATED MAJORS OR MINORS:	Speech Communication/Theatre
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	Fall 2023
PROPOSED CIP CODE:	09.0101
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	Arts and Science
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	8A
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	Language
BANNER DIVISION CODE:	DLANG

Please check this box to confirm that:

- The individual preparing this request has read [AAC Guideline 2.8](#), 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

4/12/23

Date

Note: In the responses below, references to external sources, including data sources, should be documented with a footnote (including web addresses where applicable).

1. Do you have a major in this field (*place an "X" in the appropriate box*)? 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.

Links to the applicable State statute, Board Policy, and the Board of Regents Strategic Plan are listed below for each campus.

BHSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:4
DSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:5
NSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:6
SDSMT:	SDCL § 13-60	BOR Policy 1:10:3
SDSU:	SDCL § 13-58	BOR Policy 1:10:2
USD:	SDCL § 13-57	BOR Policy 1:10:1

[Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020](#)

Dakota State University currently offers a minor in Speech Communication/Theatre.¹ This Minor is being terminated to allow delivery of the Communication Studies minor. DSU does not currently offer a major in Communication Studies.

The new Communication Studies Minor aligns with the Strategic Plan 2022-2027 in several capacities, the short of it provided below:

1. Clear communication is one of five specific values upheld by Dakota State University.² Communication is an essential skill required by cyber-savvy graduates who are lifelong learners, problem solvers, innovators and leaders who live lives of positive purpose and consequence – our mission.
2. Students must have good problem-solving skills, teamwork, public communication, small group/team communication, interviewing abilities, and more to stand out and succeed long-term in South Dakota's workforce. Following an analysis of 150 million unique U.S. job postings, the Business-Higher Education Forum identified communication as one of 14 skills deemed New Foundational Skills for the Digital Economy.³ The SDBOR Strategic Plan Goal 4 privileges new or enhanced undergraduate programs that contribute to the South Dakota and national workforce.
3. As a school focused on technology and cyber security, graduates must be able to communicate complex information to lay persons and learn how technology communication via mediated technologies matters. The proposed minor provides new opportunity to grow research and innovation in technologically-mediated communication.

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.

The *Communication Studies* minor will replace the current *Speech Communication/Theatre Minor*, modernizing our efforts to help students become competent and effective communicators in many situations: public speaking, interpersonal relationships, small groups, organizational communication, intercultural, and leadership. The minor fits into the Communication Studies area, and a terse overview of the field can be found on The National Communication Association website: <https://www.natcom.org/about-nca/what-communication>.

¹ Dakota State University. (n.d.) Speech communication theatre minor/5-12 endorsement program. <https://dsu.edu/programs/communication-studies-minor.html>

² Dakota State University (n.d.) [Mission](https://dsu.edu/about-dsu/mission-vision-values.html), Vision, & Values. <https://dsu.edu/about-dsu/mission-vision-values.html>

³ Business-Higher Education Forum and Burning Glass Technologies (2018). The New Foundational Skills of the Digital Economy. https://www.burning-glass.com/wp-content/uploads/New_Foundational_Skills.pdf

4. How will the proposed minor benefit students?

Organizations that study college students' career readiness repeatedly report communication skills, abilities, and knowledge are among the competencies employees want *regardless* of the profession. In 2021, for instance, Georgetown University's Center on Education in the Workforce released a report, *Workplace basics: The competencies employers want*, detailing how communication competency (oral, written, teamwork, leadership, and sales and customer service) is among the five most in-demand aptitudes required to be successful in their work performance. Similarly, the National Association of Colleges and Employers—in their *Job Outlook 2023* publication—reports that nearly all employers expect effective and competent communication from their employees. However, the same report also shows that college graduates are, unfortunately, not meeting those expectations and benchmarks right out of college.⁴

Regardless of their major, our students at Dakota State University must be career-ready, effective, and competent communicators. Effective communication permeates all aspects of our modern lives and affects our ability to build strong selves, relationships, businesses, partnerships, and communities. Communication is not simply acquired; it requires intentional study, time and effort to improve our ability to receive and interpret the reality around us. Communication is a must in all kinds of professional situations:

- discussing potential cybersecurity risks to a client
- pitching an idea that promotes your business
- working with sensitive patient health records
- negotiating a business partnership
- empowering your respective communities
- managing day-to-day interpersonal conflicts
- teaching or dialoguing with students
- collaborating in groups in the workplace
- coaching and motivating a team
- helping a company design a brand
- developing a video game

The Communication Studies minor at Dakota State University fills a gap in communication competencies anecdotally reported, provides students with an easy-to-adopt minor for any program, and an interdisciplinary program that strengthens other departments and areas. Students will practice becoming proficient in:

1. Crafting oral, written, and technologically mediated messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.
2. Evaluating and interpreting oral, written, and technologically mediated messages.
3. Adapting, adjusting, and solving communication issues that arise in a variety of communication contexts.

Students will explore communication topics such as interview communication, public speaking, small group dynamics, intercultural exchanges, and communication in relationships, among others. For an in-depth list of how graduates of communication programs are often more career ready, please see the National Communication Association's grant-funded Learning Outcomes in

⁴ National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2022, October). *Job outlook 2023*. <https://www.nacweb.org/store/2022/job-outlook-2023/>

Communication Project; specifically, the *College graduates with communication degrees have the knowledge and skills employers need report.*⁵

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 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Regental system dashboards, etc. Please cite any sources in a footnote.

- In the Spring of 2015, the South Dakota Employer Survey through the South Dakota Retailers Association, the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, and the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce reported that employees continuously rate the applicants for jobs are *lacking*: communication skills, decision-making skills, customer service, and interpersonal skills, teamwork, among others; however, these are CORE communication competencies addressed in the new Communication Studies Minor curriculum.⁶
- The need for communication skills training is highly evident in the continued programming through the South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation, which holds workshops and promotes sessions on soft skills, interviewing, and workplace etiquette. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, media, and communication occupations (not including the fact that all jobs require communication like cyber security and health administration) are "projected to grow 6 percent from 2021-2031, about as fast as the average for all occupations; this increase is expected to result in about 68, 6000 new jobs over the decades...The median annual wage for this group was \$62, 340 in May 2021, which has higher than the median annual wage for all occupations of \$45, 760." ⁷
- Finally, according to the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, more than half of Speech Communication and Rhetoric (B.A., BS), and Mass Communication/Media Studies (B.A., BS) are earning employment.⁸ That said, this number is likely much higher since data is not provided on Communication Studies minors earned at universities that are paired with another major.

6. Provide estimated enrollments and completions in the table below and explain the methodology used in developing the estimates (replace "XX" in the table with the appropriate year).

	Fiscal Years*			
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
<i>Estimates</i>	F.Y. 23	F.Y. 24	F.Y. 25	F.Y. 26
Students enrolled in the Minor (fall)	3	6	8	8
Completions by graduates	0	0	0	3

*Do not include current fiscal year.

⁵ National Communication Association. (2021). *Learning outcomes in communication*. <https://www.natcom.org/learning-outcomes-communication>

⁶ South Dakota Department of Education. (2015). *SD career readiness skills for all CTE clusters*. <https://doe.sd.gov/cte/softskills.aspx>

⁷ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022, September 8). *Media and communication occupations*. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/home.htm#>

⁸ U.S. Department of Labor and Regulation. (2022). 2022 Annual report of South Dakota: Job placement outcomes. https://dlr.sd.gov/lmic/menu_publications.aspx

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

First, we will be offering a contemporary, modernized version: Communication Studies. Although common in some communication departments, the combination of speech communication and theatre disciplines is part of an earlier disciplinary trend. The two fields were closely aligned in a single department. One can look at the earlier iterations of Karl E. Mundt Archives and our course offerings over the years to see that we used to have a teaching communication track. Communication Studies tend to include performative aspects of communication in the contemporary landscape, though areas like interpersonal communication, organizational communication, and rhetorical studies are much more common. This shift is clear in our own South Dakota Regental System, which in 2021 changed the SPCM (Speech Communication) course prefix to CMST (Communication Studies). The change has already started taking place in the course catalog. The switch to CMST is not simply a surface-level name change; the course prefix's modification reflects the need for our communication programs in South Dakota to be on par with the current trends, scholarship, and best practices in Communication. In addition, talks last year between the SDBOR Communication Discipline council suggest that many of the programs are teaching CMST 101: Fundamentals of Speech as Fundamentals of Communication, reiterating a trend towards modernizing our programs in S.D. with the national programs. Communication Studies the field of study, an overview of the field can be found at The National Communication Association website:

<https://www.natcom.org/about-nca/what-communication>.

1. The CMST Minor also reflects the other communication/speech programs in the Regental System with slight modifications for our DSU students. The course modification takes its inspiration from experts in the field of Communication, such as those at the National Communication Association:

<https://www.natcom.org/academic-professional-resources/teaching-and-learning/basic-course-general-education>

<https://www.natcom.org/academic-professional-resources/teaching-and-learning/classroom/undergraduate-course-syllabi>

2. Second, the proposed Communication Studies Minor is more student-centered and forward-looking. According to Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, in a 2020 publication, *Workplace Basics: The Competencies Employers Want*, a wide range of employers seeks communication-oriented skills: oral/written communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving and complex thinking, and sales and customer service. The full report on workplace competencies is available here: <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/competencies/>

The older Speech Communication and Theatre Minor focused heavily on a theatrical and public speaking focus; however, communication skills will help students get a job beyond those two areas. Students need to be able to work in small groups, they need to be able to interview successfully, and they need to be able to manage workplace and interpersonal relationships. The new Communication Studies minor would target these steady competencies.

3. Third, switching to the new Communication Studies Minor provides a straightforward narrative for our staff, faculty, students, and especially advisors. The Communication Studies Minor is student-centered and focuses on all professional communication needs any student at Dakota State University will need to communicate in their everyday lives and workplaces. The proposal has been shared with all Colleges at DSU and has received praise and overwhelming support. It creates interdisciplinary connections across a campus (BADM, MCOM, ENGL) and centers (The Paulson Cyber Incubator and Entrepreneurial Center, the Career and Professional Development, and the Center for Teaching and Learning), keeping in mind the flexibility needed by busy students. Terminating the current minor and replacing it with a new Communication Studies Minor resonates with the mission, vision, and values of Dakota State University.

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

Communication Studies Minor	Credit Hours	Percent
Requirements in Minor	9	50%
Electives in Minor	9	50%
Total	18	

B. Required Courses in the Minor

Prefix	Number	Course Title <i>(add or delete rows as needed)</i>	Prerequisites for Course <i>Include credits for prerequisites in subtotal below.</i>	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
CMST	101	Fundamentals of Speech		3	No
CMST	201	Interpersonal Communication		3	No
CMST	215	Public Speaking		3	No
Subtotal				9	

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

Prefix	Number	Course Title <i>(add or delete rows as needed)</i>	Prerequisites for Course <i>Include credits for prerequisites in subtotal below.</i>	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
Choose 9 credits from the following (6 credits must be CMST prefix)					
CMST	311	Business and Professional Communication		3	No

CMST	320	Communication in Interviewing		3	No
CMST	410	Organizational Communication		3	No
CMST	434	Small Group Communications		3	No
CMST	470	Intercultural Communication		3	No
CMST	492	Topics		3	No
CMST	498	Undergrad Research/Scholarship		3	No
BADM	344	Managerial Communication	ENGL 101	3	No
ENGL	405	Media Studies	ENGL 201	3	No
ENGL	480	Contemporary Rhetoric	ENGL 201	3	No
MCOM	353	Digital Media Communications		3	No
Subtotal				9	

- A. What are the learning outcomes expected for all students who complete the Minor? How will students achieve these outcomes?** *Complete the table below to list specific learning outcomes—knowledge and competencies—for courses in the proposed program in each row. Label each column heading with a course prefix and number. Indicate required courses with an asterisk (*). Indicate with an X in the corresponding table cell for any student outcomes that will be met by the courses included. All students should acquire the program knowledge and competencies regardless of the electives selected. Modify the table as necessary to provide the requested information for the proposed program.*

Individual Student Outcome (Same as in the text of the proposal)	Program Courses that Address the Outcomes			
	CMST 101	CMST 201	CMST 215	CMST Electives
Design communication messages (oral, written, technically mediated) for the audience purpose, context, and community				X
Identify how structures of power are influenced through communication messages (oral, written, technologically mediated).	X		X	X
Solve messaging issues (social, cultural, relational) that arise in a variety of communication contexts.		X		X

Modify the table as necessary to include all student outcomes. Outcomes in this table are to be the same ones identified in the text.

ALL courses from required to elective meet these outcomes set for the program:

1. Crafting oral, written, and technologically mediated messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.
2. Evaluating and interpreting oral, written, and technologically mediated messages.
3. Adapting, adjusting, and solving communication issues that arise in a variety of communication contexts.

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.*

All courses are offered at other SDBOR Regental Partners (South Dakota State University, University of South Dakota, Northern State University, and Black Hill State University).

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 2023

	Yes/No	If Yes, list location(s)	Intended Start Date
Off campus	No		Choose an item. Choose an item.

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods <i>Delivery methods are defined in AAC Guideline 5.5.</i>	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	Yes		Fall 2023
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	Yes	<p>If yes, identify institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Dakota State University • Northern State University • Black Hills State University • University of South Dakota <p>As the Chair of the Communication Discipline Council, I have received approval from my colleagues and will teach the classes in the modalities authorized already at our institution and regental partners.</p>	

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		Choose an item. Choose an item.

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."

No

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.

All the courses in the minor are in the course offering rotation within the current faculty load and are taught at other regental institutions. I received approval from our regental partners for other CMST courses.

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 (place an "X" in the appropriate box).

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.