

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 8 – A
DATE: June 21-22, 2023

SUBJECT

Revised BOR Policy 2:6 – System Academic Year/Academic Calendar (First Reading)

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 2:6](#) – Academic Calendars

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The Board of Regents system academic staff, working with a large group of stakeholders, have attempted to revise BOR Policy 2:6. The revisions are substantial; thus, a new draft of the Policy is being proposed in Attachment I which would replace the version that is currently in place and provided in Attachment II for reference.

The process of evaluating the academic calendar, policies and procedures included stakeholders from academic leadership, student leadership, registrar, financial aid, and accounts receivable representation. Through that cross-functional, cross-institutional representation, additional outreach by those members included faculty, students (including Student Federation), and athletics. Feedback was received informally by faculty officers at institutional-specific faculty forums with Regents and staff.

In addition, feedback was received from the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) and the Student Affairs Council (SAC) with respect to the academic calendar policy needs. Lastly, a discussion was also held with the Council of Presidents and Superintendents (COPS) on the academic calendars outlined in BOR item 8-C.

With all the feedback on functional and operational needs as well as policy implications, the proposed changes that are reflected in Attachment I include the following:

1. Aligned the structure of the policy to include the more current formatting.
2. Addition of the Definitions section.
3. Addition of the Policy Statements.
4. Important Academic Dates Updated and Enhanced.
5. References to State, Federal Regulations, and Federal Student Aid Handbook.

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20230621_8-A:

I move to approve the first reading of the new proposed BOR Policy 2:6 – System Academic Year/Academic Calendar, as presented.

From this policy, the Academic Affairs Council will develop a new guideline to assist future stakeholders as they evaluate and develop future system academic calendars.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

This policy revision enhances and provides more clarity on federal rules and regulations as compared to the current policy (Attachment II). The revised policy development included several stakeholders to ensure that the policy supports the functional, operational, and policy and governance needs for the institutions.

Most importantly, the definition section was created to further provide students with more information on why and how the academic calendar was developed. In addition, the reference to the code of federal regulations and the federal student aid handbook can now be found in the policy allowing additional research of the stakeholders and transparency of the policy.

The timeline associated with this policy will be as follows:

- First Reading – June 2023 BOR Meeting
- Second and Final Reading – August 2023 BOR Meeting

Board academic staff supports the recommendation of the new draft BOR Policy 2:6 – System Academic Year/Academic Calendar to replace the current version.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – Proposed New Draft of BOR Policy 2:6 – System Academic Year/
Academic Calendar

Attachment II – Current BOR Policy 2:6 – Academic Calendars

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: System Academic Year / Academic Calendar

NUMBER: 2:6

A. PURPOSE

This policy defines the academic year for the Regental institutions and applies to the six public institutions of higher education. This policy governs the academic calendars as approved by the Board of Regents and serves two fundamental purposes for the system. First, Federal Financial Aid requires programs to meet the established academic calendars. Second, academic instruction and processing within the student information system requires a well-coordinated academic calendar that spans admissions, registration, billing, financial aid, academic records, completion and transcription, and reporting.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Academic Calendar:** Date-driven academic year divided into formatted terms and detailed by academic and non-academic days.
2. **Academic Days:** Academic class days available in the academic calendar where academic engagement and instruction occurs.
3. **Academic Engagement:** Defined under federal regulations¹ as active participation by a student in an instructional activity related to the student's course of study and includes, but is not limited to - attending a synchronous class, lecture, recitation, or field or laboratory activity, physically or online, where there is an opportunity for interaction between the instructor and students; submitting an academic assignment; taking an assessment or an exam; participating in an interactive tutorial, webinar, or other interactive computer-assisted instruction; participating in a study group, group project, or an online discussion that is assigned by the institution; or interacting with an instructor about academic matters.
4. **Academic Year:** Represents a 365-day period establishing term begin and end dates.
5. **Census Date:** A date determined after calculating the calendar days as outlined in section D.4 for the term or non-standard term.
6. **Finals Week:** Dates designated for the delivery of final examination or completion of course assignments to conclude the term and non-standard term.
7. **Instructional Time:** A period of seven (7) consecutive days in which at least one (1) day of regularly scheduled academic engagement occurs.

¹ [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), Title 34, Part 600.2](#)

8. **Non-Academic Days:** Those calendar days that have no academic engagement activity. These days include holidays, non-scheduled class day, spring-break, administrative days, etc.
9. **Regental Institution:** Defined as one of the six (6) public universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota.
10. **Semester:** Defined as fifteen (15) weeks of instructional activity followed by finals week for Fall and Spring. The duration of weeks may be shorter for the summer semester.
11. **Term.** Defined as a more general duration of the academic calendar. The Regental system provides semester terms. Within a semester, parts of terms may exist.

C. GOVERNANCE, POLICY STATEMENTS

1. All Regental institutions shall operate under a common standard academic calendar approved by the Board of Regents except for the Medical School and Law School at the University of South Dakota.
2. The U.S. Department of Education² requires institutions with programs offering credit hours to establish an academic calendar to include thirty (30) weeks of instructional time for Fall and Spring. Instructional time does not include non-academic days or periods of orientation, counseling, homework, vacation, or other activity not related to academic engagement.
3. The full part of the term for Fall and Spring semester terms are fifteen (15) weeks of instructional time each for federal compliance. The student information system may have multiple parts of terms which are approved by the institution and must comply with federal law.
4. The Summer semester/term is an abbreviated semester and may be less than fifteen (15) weeks. The academic days and part of the term for the summer courses can be an intensive and concentrated schedule to ensure the required course contact hours and credit hour requirements are met.
5. The academic year begins with the summer term and is defined as the header [beginning] of the academic year for federal financial aid purposes.
6. Finals week shall be the last full week of the semester after the fifteen (15) weeks of instructional activity.
7. The student information system shall be utilized to process all academic processes related to the academic calendar.
8. The system enrollment services center shall work with the institutional registrar, financial aid, student accounts receivable, and general student service offices to develop a processing calendar prior to each term. This processing calendar presents a collaborative effort across

² Federal Student Aid Handbook. [Academic Years, Academic Calendars, Payment Periods, and Disbursements | 2022-2023 Federal Student Aid Handbook](#)

the institutions and across multiple disciplines (academic records, accounts receivable, admissions, financial aid, and technology).

9. The system academic processing calendar shall be posted and made available to all personnel working with academic processing.

D. IMPORTANT ACADEMIC DATES

The academic calendar includes the following important dates (listed in alphabetical order). The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) Guidelines will provide more information on system academic processing for these important dates.

1. Billing Dates

The student information system and shared student accounts receivable services shall process all billing approximately six (6) weeks prior to the start of the fall and spring terms and by May 1st for the summer term across the Regental system.

2. Disbursement of Financial Aid

Federal regulations allow the first federal financial aid disbursement to be no sooner than 10 days before the start date of each term. Each institution may set their own first disbursement date for each term and their own disbursement schedule throughout the term. Financial aid disbursement occurs on a rolling basis throughout each term.

3. Add-Drop Dates

The add/drop period is the period during which students may adjust their academic schedule for the terms without financial or academic consequences. The last day of the drop/add period for a course shall be designated as the census date for that course and will be the official date for enrollment reporting.

4. Census Dates

The official date for standard courses shall be the date the first ten (10) percent of the term ends. For any non-standard course, the census date shall be calculated for the course based on the number of calendar days for the course. When calculating ten (10) percent of the term, all days are included (Saturday, Sunday, and holiday) except for breaks of five (5) or more days. Breaks of five (5) days are excluded from the total number of days for calculating ten (10) percent of the course.

5. Mid-Term Date

The Mid Term Date shall be determined by counting the number of academic days from the beginning of a term and dividing by two (2) (rounding up where the number of class days in a term is an odd number). The Mid Term Date shall be the last day of the first half of the term.

6. Mid-Term Deficient Academic Progress Dates

Instructors shall submit a deficient academic progress report for undergraduate students no later than three (3) working days after the Mid Term Date for Fall and Spring terms.

7. Withdrawal Dates

Last day to withdraw from any/all courses must occur prior to 70 percent of the term or non-standard term to receive a 'W'. There are financial implications to withdrawing after census and up to the 70 percent date as outlined on the academic calendar. For more information on tuition and fees and withdrawal, see BOR Policy 5:7.2.

8. End of Term Dates

8.1. Finals Week

For the full part of term, the last week of the schedule is considered the finals week. It shall be after the full fifteen weeks of the semester.

8.2. Final Semester Grade Dates

Instructors shall submit all grades no later than three working days after the last day of final summative examinations and assignments for the term.

8.3. Final Grade Validation

The Registrar's Office at each university shall validate that all grades are submitted no later than two working days following the instructor's submission deadline as outlined above in 8.2.

8.4. System Processing

Immediately following completion of grade validation (next business day), the system enrollment services center must promptly initiate the student information systems processing calendar. The end of term calendar timeline is approved by the functional experts each term.

9. Refund Dates

BOR Policy 5:7.2 shall outline the refund policy for students.

E. NON-ACADEMIC APPROVED DAYS

- Holidays are considered non-academic days. The approved holiday schedule for Regental institutions is listed.

New Year's Day	January 1*
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Presidents' Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth	June 19*
Independence Day	July 4*
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Native Americans' Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans' Day	November 11*
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25*

**If January 1, June 19, July 4, November 11, or December 25 fall on a Sunday, the Monday following shall be*

observed as the holiday; if they fall on a Saturday, Friday is the holiday³.

2. The academic calendar shall have other pre-scheduled dates where no class will be scheduled (e.g., spring break). If the entire week is not scheduled, it shall not count as an instructional week.

RESOURCES:

- [BOR Policy 2:32](#)
- [BOR Policy 5:7:2](#)
- [Academic Calendar \(sdbor.edu\)](#)

SOURCE:

BOR 1978; BOR July 1971; § 1-5-1, 1974; BOR May 1990; BOR, April 1992; BOR December 1993; BOR January 1996; BOR June 1999; BOR May 2000; BOR May 2001; January 2002; BOR May 2002; BOR December 2002; March 2003; BOR December 2003; BOR May 2004; BOR December 2004; BOR December 2005; BOR March 2006; BOR December 2011; BOR March 2022; BOR August 2023.

³ [South Dakota Codified Law 1-5-1.](#)

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Academic Calendars

NUMBER: 2:6

1. Academic Terms Defined

Each institution shall operate a fall, spring, and summer term. Fall and spring shall be operated on a semester basis. Summer term begins the first day after spring semester ends and continues through the last day before fall semester begins. Fall term begins with the first day of classes and continues through the last day of finals established in the Board approved academic calendar. Spring term begins with the first day of classes and continues through the last day of finals established in the Board approved academic calendar.

Classes during the summer term typically will begin after the processing days in May and end prior to the processing days in August.

Classes may be offered during the inter-term period between the last day of finals in the fall semester and the first day of classes in the spring semester. Classes beginning during this period will be transcribed with spring semester classes and will be included as academic standing is determined at the end of the semester.

Classes may be scheduled during the processing days after spring term in May, after summer term in August, and in the inter-term between fall and spring semesters under the conditions specified below.

1. Summer term courses scheduled to begin in or to begin and complete during the processing dates in May must be approved by the university Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee.
2. With permission of the university Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee, only the following courses may be scheduled during the processing dates in August: x94, x95, x96, x97, study abroad, and courses associated with programs designed to help students complete remedial course requirements prior to the beginning of the fall term.
3. Courses scheduled to begin or to begin and complete during the inter-term dates in December/January must be approved by the university Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee. Additional approval by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee and by the Director of Financial Aid will be needed if financial aid is to be provided for students enrolled in these courses although in general courses offered during this inter-term will not be eligible for financial aid.

A semester shall consist of a minimum of fifteen (15) weeks. The number of class days in a given semester shall be inclusive of those days set aside for registration, new student orientation concurrent with registration, assessment/performance testing and final

examinations but exclusive of holidays and days set aside for new student orientation prior to registration. New student orientation may be concurrent with or prior to registration.

Academic guidelines require that all courses offered for credit must involve a minimum of fifteen contact hours over three instructional days for each credit hour awarded.

Courses offered by distance education should have equivalent standards, rigor, student outcomes, substance and assignments as courses offered by face-to-face means. Distance education courses may be scheduled on a semester basis and require that students complete learning experiences on a particular timeline (i.e. each week). Also, distance education courses may be offered asynchronously to allow students maximum flexibility in participation. Asynchronous courses may or may not necessarily be offered on a semester basis. The required length for a distance education course is determined by course expectations and scheduling. The student will conclude the course upon completion of course requirements. Typically, a one credit hour course lasting for a semester equates to 45 hours of effort by the student.

The academic term for correspondence courses is defined as follows:

1. The start date of a correspondence course is the date the student registers for the course or the start date of the standard term (Fall/Spring/Summer).
2. The length of a correspondence course based on the start date may be one of the following:
 - a. 175 calendar days (approximately 6 months)
 - b. 350 calendar days (approximately 12 months)
 - c. a standard term (Fall/Spring/Summer)
3. The Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant an extension of up to 60 days upon student request.

The academic term for asynchronous Internet courses is defined as follows:

1. The start date of an asynchronous Internet course is the date the student registers for the course or the start date of the standard term (Fall/Spring/Summer).
2. The length of an asynchronous Internet course based on the start date may be one of the following:
 - a. a standard term (Fall/Spring/Summer)
 - b. a flexible schedule other than a standard term (Fall/Spring/Summer)

2. Academic Calendar

Institutions of higher education, under control of the Board of Regents, shall operate on a common academic calendar with common periods during the summer term and the fall and spring semesters at each institution when classes are not in session. The medical and law schools are excluded from the common academic calendar. Academic calendars shall be designed a minimum of two (2) years in advance with annual extensions recommended to the Executive Director by the Council of Presidents and Superintendents no later than the May meeting.

3. Holidays

The schedule of holidays for the institutions of higher education is listed in 4 below. Classes shall not be scheduled to meet on holidays.

1. Class and lab schedule preceding multiple day holidays

No classes or labs will begin from the originating campus at or later than 5:00 PM on the day preceding a multiple day holiday.

2. Class and lab schedule preceding single day holidays

The Friday and Saturday class or lab schedules that precede or follow the single Monday holidays will not be changed.

4. Holiday Schedule for Higher Education Institutions

New Year's Day	January 1*
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Presidents' Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth	June 19*
Independence Day	July 4*
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Native Americans' Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans' Day	November 11*
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25*

*If January 1, June 19, July 4, November 11, or December 25 fall on a Sunday, the Monday following shall be observed as the holiday; if they fall on a Saturday, Friday is the holiday. (BR July, 1971, P. 366) (§ 1-5-1 1991)

5. Drop and Add Period

The drop/add period is the time period during which students may adjust their academic schedule for the term without financial or academic consequences. The last day of the drop/add period for a course is designated as the census date for that course and is the official date for enrollment reporting. The end of the drop and add period for standard and non-standard courses offered in a semester shall be the date the first 10 percent of the term ends or the day following the first class meeting, whichever is later. When calculating 10% of the term, breaks of five or more days are not included when counting the total number of days but Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays are. Student registrations can only be added to courses after the end of the drop and add period by approval of the chief academic officer of the university.

6. Census Date

The census date is the official date for enrollment reporting for a course. The official date for enrollment reporting, or census date, for standard courses shall be the date the first 10 percent of the term ends.

For any non-standard course, the census date must be calculated for the course based on the number of calendar meeting days for the course.

Refer to BOR policy 5:7 for information on refunds.

7. Mid Term Date

The Mid Term Date is determined by counting the number of class days from the beginning of a term and dividing by 2 and rounding up when the number of class days in a term is an odd number. The Mid Term Date is the last day of the first half of the term.

8. Date for a Grade of W

Undergraduate and graduate students who drop a course, or withdraw from the System, shall receive a grade of “W” if that action occurs anytime between the day after the census day for that course and the day that corresponds with the completion of 70 percent of the class days for that course. Likewise, a student who withdraws from the system during that time period also shall receive grades of “W” for all the courses in which he/she is registered. (**Exception:** a student who completely withdraws from the Regental system from the first day of a class(es) until the census date of the class(es) will also have a pseudo course of WD 101 (Undergraduate) or WD 801 (graduate) with a “W” grade entered on their Transcript.) (Refer to policy 5:7.2)

For standard classes, the last day to receive a grade of “W” is determined by calculating 70 percent of the class meeting days in the term, counting from the first day of classes in the term and rounding up if the calculation produces a fractional value greater than or equal to 0.5.

For any non-standard course, the last day to receive a grade of “W” is based on the number of class meeting days for the course, using the method described above.

A notation of the date of withdrawal will be included on the student’s transcript if he/she withdraws from the system. (Refer to policy 5:7.2)

Students may not drop a course or withdraw from the System after the time period specified above. (Refer to policy 5:7.2)

9. Date for a Grade of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Undergraduate and graduate students may choose the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade option within the Drop and Add Period as specified in 2:6.5 above.

10. Date for an Audit Grade

Undergraduate and graduate students may choose to audit a class within the Drop and Add Period as specified in 2:6.5 above.

11. Date for Submission of Mid Term Deficient Academic Progress Report

Instructors will submit a deficient academic progress report for undergraduate students no later than five working days after the Mid Term Date for Fall and Spring terms. Deficient academic progress reports will be made available to undergraduate students no later than eight working days after the Mid Term Date for Fall and Spring terms.

12. Date for Submission of Term Grades

Instructors will submit all grades no later than three working days after the last day of final examinations for the term.

13. Date for Entry of Term Grades

The Registrar's Office at each university will enter and verify grades no later than eight working days after the last day of final examinations for the term.

SOURCE:

BOR 1978; BOR July 1971; § 1-5-1, 1974; BOR May 1990; BOR, April 1992; BOR December 1993; BOR January 1996; BOR June 1999; BOR May 2000; BOR May 2001; January 2002; BOR May 2002; BOR December 2002; March 2003; BOR December 2003; BOR May 2004; BOR December 2004; BOR December 2005; BOR March 2006; BOR December 2011; BOR March 2022.