

DSU
DAKOTA STATE

Online Handbook



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Office of Online Education

If you are thinking of taking online courses at Dakota State University, the Office of Online Education is available to assist with general questions about online and distance courses, or to help you through the process of taking an online course. You can contact the Office of Online Education for direct assistance at 605-256-5049 or email the Office of Online Education [here](#).

Are you ready to take an online course?

Visit our [Online Readiness Quiz](#) to get instant feedback to help you make the right decision. Once you have responded to all the questions, you will receive a total score and some suggestions that will help you decide if you are ready to take online courses.

Academic Calendar

Fall and spring terms are 16 weeks in length. The fall term starts in late August and lasts through mid-December. Spring semester starts in early January and lasts through mid-May. Summer sessions vary in length from 4 weeks to 12 weeks, May through August. If you would like to view Dakota State University's current academic calendar you can do so on our website by clicking [here](#). If you are looking for a holiday and break calendar, please see the [SD BOR Academic Calendar](#).

Technology Support & Requirements

To ensure the effective delivery of DSU online courses, minimum hardware and software requirements have been established. Make sure that your computer meets the platform requirements for D2L Learning Environments.

Platform Requirements for Brightspace (D2L) Learning Environment (LE)

	Requirements	Recommended
Operating System	Windows 7, 10, or Mac OS X Note: Microsoft has ended its active support for Windows XP and will end its support for Vista in April 2017.	Windows 10 Mac OS X
Video	SVGA Monitor Minimum resolution: 800x600	Resolution of 1024x768 or greater
Internet Speed	DSL (download speed 768 Kbps) or higher	Broadband Mobile or Cable (download 3 Mbps or higher)
Java® Runtime Environment (JRE)	JRE current (required to run LiveRoom 4.0 and Equation Editor)	JRE Current
JavaScript	Enabled	Enabled
Cookies	Enabled	Enabled

Supported Browsers

	Supported Version(s)	Maintenance Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android (current)	Android	Latest
Apple®	iOS® 10	Safari	Latest
Microsoft Surface™	Windows® 10	Internet Explorer	11
BlackBerry® (mobile only)	BlackBerry 10	BlackBerry	Latest

[Click Here to Check Your System](#)

Browser Plug-ins Needed for Most Courses

1. Adobe Reader® (for reading PDF files): <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
2. Adobe Flash Player (for playing Flash videos): <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

Specific curricula for college courses may require additional software installations or purchases. Any additional software requirements will be provided in the syllabi for your courses.

Reference: D2L Brightspace Documentation on [Browser Support](#).

Netiquette

Netiquette is the term for common social norms and proper manners needed when communicating and interacting with others in an online environment. Here are some general guidelines for online coursework:



Be vocal and prompt:

If you run into any issue, do not hesitate to let the instructor know. Write down what happened to provide the instructor or the Help Desk with clues to figure out what might have gone wrong so they may better resolve the issue. Email the instructor when you have any questions or are unclear about something.



Write clearly and describe fully:

In face-to-face communication, we can clarify and explain immediately if we find anything missing in what we said or if others do not understand a statement. In online communication, it's often difficult to tell if such miscommunication occurs. To minimize possible misinterpretation or confusion, it is important to write the message clearly and fully describe the issue.



Be respectful:

Whether you are receiving or sending an email, or participating in an online discussion, it is important to be courteous and respectful of others who might have different cultural, language or religious backgrounds. Whenever you disagree with others' opinions, keep in mind that a good discussion focuses on issues and questions. Others may have points in what they say. Avoid words that might cause personal offense.



Use emoticons only where appropriate:

In the online environment, tone of voice or facial expressions can't help convey or interpret meanings. Emoticons can be used in conjunction with text to complement or supplement messages, but they may not be familiar to all, so be cautious when using symbols and emoticons. It is better to explain ideas fully and clearly.



Use discussion boards for group discussion/information sharing:

Discussion boards are intended for sharing messages with the whole class or group. If a message is intended for only one individual and is not of general interest or concern to the class, use email instead to send that person a private message.



Check spelling and follow grammar rules:

Be sure to check your spelling and grammar prior to sending your email messages or postings to the discussion board. Avoid writing messages in all capital letters. THIS IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD AS SHOUTING!



Think twice before pushing the "Send" button:

Make sure that the message you have just composed is really what you want to say. Think about how the recipient(s) may feel about or interpret the message before you press the "Send" button. It is much easier to adjust or revise before sending than correcting or apologizing afterwards.

Additional References:

1. [The Core Rules of Netiquette](#)
2. [Top 12 Be-Attitudes of Netiquette for Academicians](#)
3. [Are You Teaching Good Netiquette? - TeachOnline](#)
4. [15 Rules of Netiquette for Online Discussion Boards](#)

Successful Online Learners



Goal-Oriented

Manage your tasks & focus on deadlines.



Be Active

Challenge yourself to post first in the forum.



Independent

Take responsibility for your learning process.



Work with Others

Working as a team from a distance can be a challenge and rewarding.

Time Management and Studying



Plan Time

Create a weekly schedule so that you can settle into a routine.



Relaxation Time

Leave regular time in your schedule every day to prevent burnout and reduce stress.



Mini-Deadlines

Set mini-deadlines in advance of your final projects.



Avoid Distractions

Improve your concentration and work pace by managing common distractions.

Advice for an Online Student



Support at Home

It is important to have the support of family and friends to help you accomplish your goals.



Form Study Groups

Post a message on the online forum and use video chat to set up an online study session.



Support at University

Reach out to your support network at DSU on social media. Follow students, instructors, assistants, advisors and tutors.



Ask Questions

Reach out to your instructors and other students to help you clarify instructions.

Taking Online Courses at DSU

Once you have decided to begin online classes at Dakota State, here are some resources you will utilize.

MyDSU Portal

[MyDSU](#), Dakota State University's web-based portal, is accessible anywhere there is an internet connection. MyDSU Portal allows users to access applications and resources, store and share news, information, communications and documents. Use the portal as your one-stop access point to applications you use often, included WebAdvisor, Desire2Learn (D2L) and school email. MyDSU Portal also contains many resources that will assist you with a variety of university support services. Instructions for retrieving, setting up your passwords, accessing your accounts and setting up your MyDSU Portal are accessed from this link: [get my account info](#). Please record your DSU/BORIS username(s) and email address as you will need this to access your email and coursework. You will use your student ID number to log in.

Accessing Your DSU Email

All students of Dakota State University have a DSU email address. We require you to use this for your coursework. You will also receive official university correspondence through this email address. It will be important to have your email set up and accessible before classes begin. In order to access your email, log into [MyDSU](#) and set up your credentials.

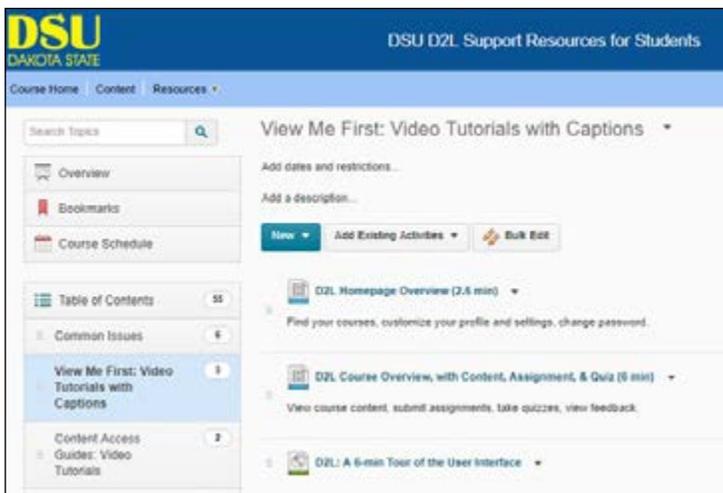
Desire2Learn

DSU utilizes the learning management system (LMS) Desire2Learn (D2L), to offer all online courses. D2L provides a web-based environment for online course delivery and class interaction.

To access your courses, go directly through D2L's [login](#) page or to access D2L through [MyDSU](#) Portal on the [DSU web page](#) click, My DSU on the top right-hand side of the page.

Click **Login to MyDSU Portal** on the login page, enter your BORIS username and password, which is the same username and password for both Desire2Learn and WebAdvisor. After login, click the **Connect to D2L** button under the **My D2L** widget to go to your D2L course homepage.

We have a collection of [D2L Support Resources for Students](#) in D2L. Please login to the D2L site and check them out, particularly the View Me First Video Tutorials.



If you need help or assistance, contact DSU D2L at DSU-D2L@sdbor.edu.

WebAdvisor

[WebAdvisor](#) provides registration, SDePay, course listings, grades and program evaluation information for all DSU faculty, students and their advisors. WebAdvisor uses your BORIS username/password, which is the same as your D2L account.

To access your grades, log into your student WebAdvisor account via the MyDSU Portal, and go to Academic Profile>Grades. Please note that your class schedule, transcript information and program evaluation can be found under the academic profile.

Starfish

Starfish is an early alert tool used by Dakota State University to support student success. You may receive a Starfish flag or an email from your advisor, coach, professor or others in the university community when someone is concerned about your success at the university. You may also receive a Kudo through Starfish to recognize outstanding performance. You will also find information about your advisor, your professors and university services in Starfish. You can get to Starfish through D2L, WebAdvisor, and the DSU Portal. For more detailed information, see the [Starfish User Guide](#) in the MyDSU Portal under Student Services. If you have any questions contact the DSU Starfish Help Desk at starfish@dsu.edu.

Directory

Contact information for instructors, advisors or DSU staff can be found on our [online directory](#).

Academic Support Services

Ordering Textbooks

One of the major functions of the bookstore is to provide the sale of required textbooks in direct support of the academic programs of the university. Used books are available for most courses at a substantial savings over new book prices. To access the book order site, simply log into the MyDSU Portal and click on bookstore link to the right side of your screen. Click on the “Buy Your Books” link and search by course. Additionally, you can order your books by phone, fax, mail, email or online:



Phone: (605) 256-5238



Email: bookstore@dsu.edu



Fax: (605) 256-5020



Online: <http://www.dsubookstore.com>



Mail: 820 N. Washington Ave.
Madison, SD 57042

Library Services

The Karl E. Mundt Library's mission is to support the academic programs and information needs of all Dakota State University students, faculty and staff. One of the chief responsibilities of an academic library is to train undergraduate and graduate students in information literacy so they are able to find, evaluate and use information to solve problems and to make decisions effectively. Students need such knowledge and skill to function successfully as continuous learners in an ever-changing information world. To successfully meet its mission, the library provides excellent collections, information systems, services, instruction and staff.

The library provides access to an extensive collection of materials through its online catalog. In addition to its print holdings, the Mundt Library subscribes to numerous electronic indexes and full text research databases, most notably EBSCO's Academic Search Premier, IEEE Xplore Digital Library, ProQuest Research Library, ABI-Inform, MLA Bibliography and Lexis-Nexis. These databases are authoritative scholarly research tools needed to support DSU's academic programs. In addition, the library's collection of e-books continues to grow.

The library's [website](#) provides the on- and off-campus community with direct access to the information resources critical to the various disciplines. Materials held by other libraries are also readily available through the interlibrary loan, so the Mundt Library can quickly meet an individual's information needs. The library also provides online access to tutorials and other research aids for the independent scholar.

The most important and best resources are the library staff. These trained professionals are available to help you find and use the resources you need. Reach them online by using the “Ask DSU Librarians” link on the library's [website](#). The library has 24-hour access for most resources and services available through its website. Visit the Mundt Library's [homepage](#) to search for information, request services, and learn more about this resource.

DSU Writing Center

The DSU Writing Center & Writing Center Online provide reading and writing support to undergraduate students across a variety of disciplines. From interpreting a course text to developing or finalizing an essay, our learning assistants can assist you at any stage of the process. In addition to one-on-one consultations, the Writing Center offers walk-in hours (on campus) and group workshops in reading, study skills, scholarly formatting, research and a variety of other topics.

Distance students may access these resources through the Writing Center Online page in D2L. Our learning assistants are available to meet via video conferencing, D2L Collaborate, or provide asynchronous feedback through a D2L dropbox folder. Additional information and resources are available on our D2L page. To set up your student access, please email writingcenter@dsu.edu and a member of the staff will add you to the Writing Center Online and provide additional instructions for submitting your work.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (OIEA)

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (OIEA) provides services to prospective and current students, and supports academic and administrative units across DSU. The staff administers placement exams (utilizing ACCUPLACER or ACT), CLEP testing, and assists in coordinating the major field tests. Internally, the OIEA also guides the accreditation process through the Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program, supports strategic planning efforts, along with the assessment of student learning reporting.

Please contact OIEA at 605-256-5101 or assessoffice@dsu.edu for additional information. More information about their services can be found [here](#).

Proctor/Testing Information

A proctor is a person who monitors exams. The proctor will make sure academic integrity is being used at all times. All instructors will determine whether their courses will need a proctor for examinations. Please make sure to check your instructor's syllabus or course's D2L regarding proctoring. Proctor forms are submitted each semester. Proctoring fees, if applicable, are the student's responsibility.

DSU online students using the South Dakota Board of Regents (SDBOR) approved Testing Centers (listed below) will be approved immediately. Online students living in SDBOR approved areas must use the approved proctoring site. Students in the Madison area must proctor with DSU Proctoring Services unless they are a high school student.

Proctoring Services SDBOR Universities

BHSU: Spearfish Testing Center
Black Hills State University
Lower Level of EY Library & Learning Center, Room 003
1200 University Street, Unit 9078
Spearfish, SD 57799-9078
Phone: 605-642-6099
BHSPTestingCenter@bhsu.edu

USD: The Division of Continuing & Distance Education
414 E. Clark St.,
#211 McKusick
Vermillion, SD 57069
Phone: 605-677-6240
testingcenter@usd.edu

CUC – Pierre
925 E. Sioux Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-2160
sdsu.cuc@sdsu.edu

BHSU: Rapid City Testing Center
4300 Cheyenne Blvd.
Rapid City, SD 57709
Phone: 605-718-4193
ucrtestingcenter@sdbor.edu

NSU: Academic Affairs
1200 S. Jay St.
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Phone: 605-626-3290
nsu.proctor@wolves.northern.edu

University Center – Sioux Falls
4801 N. Career Ave., Room 211
Sioux Falls, SD 57107
Phone: 605-367-5641
testingcenter@sduniversity.org

SDSU: Testing Center
1100 College Ave.
Brookings, SD 57007
Phone: 605-688-4499
sdsu.testing@sdsu.edu

DSU: Office of Online Education
820 N. Washington Ave.
Madison, SD 57042
Phone: 605-256-5049
proctor@dsu.edu

Proctor/Testing Information (cont'd)

Students who are testing at DSU must schedule proctored exams at least one full business day in advance. On-campus proctor hours can be found in [MyDSU Portal](#). Hours are subject to change.

If you are unable to take your examination(s) with DSU's proctoring services or one of the other SDBOR institutions, you must arrange to have your exam(s) supervised by an appropriate proctor in your area. A proctor outside of DSU or SDBOR Testing Centers will need to be verified, so you must complete the online student [Proctor Registration Online Form](#) so your instructor knows who you are proctoring with. This proctor form is not used for other institutions. You are encouraged to add web links when submitting an online proctor form to verify your proctor's information.

After submitting the proctor form, an email will be sent to the proctor and/or a call made to establish their credentials. Your instructor gives final approval of the proctor. Once your proctor been verified, your instructor will send exam information to your chosen proctor.

DSU may at any time request additional verification or mandate an alternate proctor. The proctor services may be terminated at any time by any or all three active parties (student, proctor, DSU) with written notice to all parties involved.

Student Support Services

MyDSU Portal

An academic advisor is assigned to each student, an example of Dakota State University's commitment to personalize education. New students are introduced to their advisor through their welcome letter. Subsequently, students should meet with their advisor to get acquainted and discuss career and educational plans. Thereafter, students should stay in contact with their advisor on a regular basis to assess progress and discuss pre-registration procedures for the next semester.

The advisor is the advisee's primary contact for planning and maintaining an academic program. Information related to curriculum changes, course schedules, grades, etc., is given to the advisor, who in turn informs the student. A student's questions should be directed to their advisor who will either answer them immediately or find a source for answers and relay them to the student. Advisors may refer students to the appropriate department with questions or concerns as needed.

Students with a declared major are assigned an advisor who is a member of the college responsible for that major. A student with a declared major who wishes to change advisors should contact that college's office for the appropriate paperwork. Students without a declared major are assigned an advisor who is either an instructor in one of their initial courses or a faculty member in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Each student is ultimately responsible for his/her own academic schedule and activities. The dean of each college is responsible for maintaining and evaluating the advising system within that academic unit. The provost/vice president for academic affairs is responsible for maintaining and evaluating the overall advising system.

ITS Help Desk

The ITS Help Desk provides all online and on-campus students with excellent support resources, and can assist with any sort of technical issues, such as:

- Your user accounts are not working or you are unable to log in to university resources;
- You are having difficulties with your assigned DSU device or personal computer;
- You are receiving error messages when accessing your online courses.

Help is available in several formats, all with a click on your computer.

- **DSU's knowledge base:** Answers to many questions can be found in our knowledge base articles.
- **DSU's service catalog:** Need something that ITS provides? Ask for it through our service catalog. Information gets routed automatically to the team that can help you, or browse the catalog to get the help you need with all your IT-related problems or questions.
- **Email:** A service ticket is automatically created when you email help@dsu.edu. These tickets are constantly monitored and addressed during business hours.
- **Telephone:** During support center hours, student technicians at the Help Desk are available to answer your call to 605-256-5675.
- **DSU's remote assistance:** DSU utilizes the Bomgar product to provide remote assistance for those who need help configuring and troubleshooting hardware and software issues.
- **After-hours help:** Students can call 605-256-5675 and leave a detailed issue description. Your message will be forwarded as a service ticket, and the first available technician will respond first thing during business hours. You may also submit a service ticket online by emailing help@dsu.edu to schedule a date/time for after-hours tech support. ITS Help Desk personnel will do their best to accommodate your support needs.

IMPORTANT: DSU Help Desk's operational hours are:

Monday – Friday

8 a.m. – 5 p.m. (during academic year)

7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (summer break)

Dropping Courses

A student may drop a class and receive tuition and fee refunds anytime during the official drop/add period. Check the [academic calendar](#) for semester add/drop dates.

Withdrawal Process

This section is applicable if dropping one or more courses, but not all courses for the semester. A student may withdraw from a class after the drop/add deadline, up until the last day to withdraw in the academic calendar. Students who withdraw during this time period earn a “WD” in the course and do not receive any refund. The “WD” grade does not affect the student’s grade point average. A student is allowed a maximum of six WD grades; after the sixth single-course withdrawal, a grade of “WFL” is assigned, which counts toward the student’s GPA the same as an “F” grade. Students are not allowed to withdraw from specific classes after the published last day to withdraw except under extenuating circumstances and only with the approval of the provost/vice president for academic affairs. Anticipated course failure does not constitute an extenuating circumstance.

For questions or assistance, contact the Office of Online Education at (605) 256-5049 or online@dsu.edu.

Withdrawal from the University

When a student withdraws from all their courses in any academic term, they also withdraw from the university, whether or not they intend to return. If the withdrawal is after the add/drop period, a grade of “WW” will be posted for all courses for the term, and a partial refund may be calculated based on the date of withdrawal. If the withdrawal occurs after courses have begun but before the add/drop deadline for full refund, WD-101 or WD-801 will be posted to the transcript under the term to indicate enrollment. If a student is enrolled at more than one Board of Regents institution, the student must withdraw from all courses at all institutions. To initiate a student’s withdrawal from the university and to notify all appropriate university offices of that withdrawal, students should contact the Office of Online Education at (605) 256-5049 or online@dsu.edu.

The effective date of withdrawal is the date the student initiates the withdrawal process officially, either verbally or in writing, with the appropriate office. Failure to officially withdraw will result in failing grades in all courses, forfeiture of any possible refund of charges, and will impact federal financial aid eligibility. Additionally, a student is withdrawn from the university if classes have begun and the university has administratively suspended a student for reasons such as non-payment of tuition and fees, disciplinary sanctions, etc.

Dates for withdrawal are found on the Academic Calendar located [here](#) on the DSU website.

Financial Aid

Dakota State University makes every effort to help eligible students secure the finances needed to begin and complete their college education. The university provides financial aid assistance to qualifying students in the form of scholarships, grants, loans and work study opportunities. In addition, all sources of student financial aid (agency, private, federal, state and institutional) are coordinated through the Financial Aid Office. Any funding in addition to the student and family contribution is considered financial aid and is processed through this DSU office.

For a complete listing of financial aid programs, policies, and alternative financing options, visit the MyDSU Portal or the [DSU website](#). Application information, eligibility requirements, loan counseling, and links to current loan information can be accessed via the MyDSU Portal. Eligibility is determined annually based on the results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), DSU scholarship application, student date of application and student financial aid satisfactory academic progress. Electronic applications for institutional, federal aid and other aid sources may be done through links found online.

Financial Aid (cont'd)

Students may [access consumer information](#) required for DSU to participate in federal aid programs through this office such as Student Right to Know, Placement Statistics, Crime Report, Equity in Athletics and average graduate loan debt information. If a student is convicted of a drug-related offense while they are receiving any type of federal financial aid, they may become ineligible for federal financial aid for a period of time, as determined by the type of offense. Juvenile offenses (unless tried as an adult) and convictions reversed or set aside do not count. For more information, please contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243.

Professional staff are available to assist students in determining educational funding options and understanding available programs. If students have a change in their family situation during the school year, they should contact the Financial Aid Office regarding special circumstance consideration.

The financial aid application priority date and institutional scholarship application deadline is March 1.

Paying for Tuition/Fees

Dakota State University offers online billing and payment through SDePay. Details can be found on the student portal at [MyDSU](#)>Financial>Pay for College/Tuition & Fees or on the [website](#). Students may also contact the DSU Cashier's Office at Cashier@dsu.edu or 605-256-5271.

Counseling

We realize there is more to college than remarkable academic achievements. It is about meeting goals in all areas of your life. The Student Success Center is here to help you overcome challenges, attain life goals and enhance your personal growth. Our counseling resources are here to help you succeed academically, socially and personally. On MyDSU, you can find more information about our services, staff and resources.

For more information, please contact the Student Success Center by calling 605-256-5121 or email success.center@dsu.edu. In an emergency, please call 911.

Veterans Affairs

As a veteran, you have many educational benefits available to you. DSU is accredited by the SAA (State Approving Agency) as a Program Eligible for Veterans Benefits. We have also been recognized for five years in a row as a Military Friendly School by Victory Media, and are proud to serve our growing veteran and military student population. Along with providing you with one-on-one attention with our veteran benefits coordinator, we continue to support you during your DSU career with our Military Resource Center.

To help make your online education experience a success, and we are happy to answer any questions. Give us a call at (605) 256-5815 or email veteran.assistant@dsu.edu. Feel free to visit our website at: <http://dsu.edu/admissions/veteran-benefits>

Academic Policies

Academic Appeals/Freedom in Learning

Administrative officers of the university have the responsibility and authority to make decisions within their respective areas of jurisdiction. In the case of a concern or complaint regarding an academic matter, a student should first discuss the concern with the official directly responsible for the area involved (see [Appealing Academic or Administrative Decisions](#) policy and/or the [Academic Integrity](#) policy).

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and Dakota State University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is instead related to judgment of their opinion or conduct should contact the dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the [evaluation](#).

Disability Services

To receive accommodations for a disability at DSU, students must:

1. Contact the Disability Services Office by:
 - Calling 605-256-5121,
 - Emailing success.center@dsu.edu,
 - Completing the [Disability Request Form](#) or,
 - Returning the Disability Notification card that comes with our registration materials.
2. Provide documentation of the disability. Students requesting accommodations need to forward copies of their testing/diagnosis records to DSU's Disability Services Office. Please call 605-256-5121 for details on what the records should include. Mail the information to Disability Services, 820 N. Washington Ave., Madison, SD 57042 or fax 605-256-5854.

It is very important that students request accommodations and submit their documentation as soon as possible. Requests for accommodations must be made every semester the student registers for classes. The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are very clear in stating that disability-related information is to be treated with strict confidentiality.

Academic Integrity

Dakota State University is committed to providing students with a quality education. The faculty of DSU will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form. The Academic Integrity Board policy clarifies the definition of academic dishonesty, the student's rights, and the faculties' rights and responsibilities to prohibit, limit and censure instances of academic dishonesty. [Academic Integrity policy](#).

Diversity Services

Diversity is the key to excellence in education. DSU is committed to enriching the lives of our students, faculty and staff by providing a diverse campus where the exchange of ideas, knowledge and perspectives is an active part of learning. The goal of Diversity Services is to make your time at DSU a great experience by learning about yourself and others. We can assist you in many ways from admissions advice and registration help to scholarship identification. If you need to contact the diversity office, please call (605)-256-7347.

State Authorization



National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements

*A voluntary, regional approach
to state oversight of distance education*

SD-SARA

The South Dakota Board of Regents, on behalf of the State of South Dakota, has entered into an agreement to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). South Dakota's agreement is through the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), which is one of the four regional education compacts who administer SARA.

SDBOR has been designed by the state as the portal agency for SD-SARA and administers SARA within South Dakota. SDBOR's responsibilities as a portal agency include the following: accepting, reviewing, and submitting applications from South Dakota institutions wishing to participate in SARA; reviewing compliance; serving as liaison with SARA administrators from other states; and accepting and investigating student complaints.

NC-SARA establishes a state-level reciprocity process that supports the nation in its efforts to increase the educational attainment of its people by making state authorization more efficient, effective and uniform. Membership in NC-SARA is voluntary for both states and institutions. Once a state becomes a member of NC-SARA, all degree-granting post-secondary institutions from all sectors (public colleges and universities as well as non-profit and for-profit independent institutions) accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education are eligible to participate in SARA. Institutions that participate in SARA are authorized in all states who are members of NC-SARA.

Grievance Processes

For information on the academic grievance process, please refer to [South Dakota Board of Regents Policy 2:9](#). This policy governs academic disputes involving students. Such disputes most commonly arise as a result of student dissatisfaction with assigned grades, but students may also invoke the standards and procedures provided under this policy to challenge academic responses to instances involving alleged student academic misconduct or to challenge other decisions, justified on academic grounds, that affect their participation in or completion of university academic programs.

Additional information about the academic grievance process can be found at the [Notification of Complaint Process for Program Integrity Grievance Procedure](#) page.

For information on the non-academic grievance process, please refer to [Board of Regents Policy 3.4](#).

SD-SARA Policy

[SDBOR Policy 1:29 – South Dakota State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement \(SARA\)](#)

SARA Complaint Procedures

The complaint procedures for SD-SARA can be found in Section 7 of SDBOR SARA Policy 1:29. Complaints must first be processed through the institution's own procedures for resolution of complaints. The SARA administrator will verify that all complaints have been received and processed by the institution, and will not consider complaints that have not gone through the institutional complaint process. Complainants who processed their complaints through institutional complaint procedures but remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the institutional process may request that the SARA administrator review the institutional resolution of the complaint.

SARA Complaint Procedures (cont'd)

Complaints to the SARA administrator must specify:

- The basis for believing that the institutional action is inconsistent with the accreditation or SARA requirements,
- The harm caused to the complainant by virtue of the inconsistency, and
- The corrective action that the complainant seeks.

If the complainant alleges that institutional documents were misleading, the request should contain the portions of the catalog, letters or email exchanged between the complainant and the institution, and should identify with specificity statements what the complainant found to be misleading and what the complainant understood the statements to mean.

[SARA Complaint Resolution Form](#)

[SARA Complaint Procedures Flow Chart](#)

[SD-SARA](#)

Complaint Processes

Notification of Complaint Process for Program Integrity

NOTE: This procedure is different from the university's [Appealing Academic and Administrative Decisions Policy \(03-30-00\)](#).

If you are taking any DSU courses and have a complaint about your experience, there is a DSU process for submitting a student grievance. You may also contact the [Higher Learning Commission](#), which is DSU's regional accrediting agency.

Any person may file a complaint with the executive director of the South Dakota Board of Regents to obtain a review and appropriate action on allegations that an institution governed by the board:

- Violated S.D. consumer protection laws;
- Engaged in fraud or false advertising;
- Violated S.D. laws relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions or programs;
- Failed to provide an educational program meeting contemporary standard for content and rigor;
- Failed to assign qualified instructors;
- Violated one or more accreditation requirements.

Additionally, students majoring in teacher education, business administration, respiratory care, and health information management, as well as veterans, may contact their respective accrediting agencies.

If the institution has not already considered and acted upon the complaint, the executive director will refer the matter to the institutional president for review and action. If the complainant challenges an institutional disposition of the complaint, the executive director will provide for an independent review and disposition of the allegations.

The executive director may be contacted at:

South Dakota Board of Regents Office of the Executive Director
306 East Capitol Avenue, Suite 200
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-2545
Phone 605-773-3455
info@sdbor.edu

Allegations involving violation of consumer protection laws may also be filed with:

Office of Attorney General Division of Consumer Protection
1302 E Hwy 14 Ste 3
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone 605-773-4400
1-800-300-1986 (in-state only)
Fax 605-773-7163
consumerhelp@state.sd.us
[Online Complaint Form](#)

Complaint Resolution

Pursuant to the United States Department of Education's Program Integrity Rule, DSU is required to provide all prospective and current students with the contact information of the state agency or agencies that handle complaints against postsecondary education institutions offering distance learning or correspondence education within that state.

Students residing in other states while enrolled in a course offered by Dakota State University are encouraged to utilize the institution's internal complaint or review policies and procedures prior to filing a complaint with the state agency or agencies. However, if the complaint is not resolved through these processes, a student may refer to the following list to identify the office(s) in the state in which the student resides. They may then file a complaint against any public institution in South Dakota.

[National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#)

Contact the Office of Online Education for more information at 605-256-5049 or online@dsu.edu.

Teacher Certification and Licensure

Teaching certificates in South Dakota are issued by the South Dakota Department of Education. The elementary certificate qualifies the holder to teach subjects in grades K-8. The K-12 or secondary certificate qualifies the holder to teach subjects in grades K-12 or 7-12, respectively. A middle level certification and applicable middle school content certification is required to teach in formally organized middle schools or junior highs in South Dakota. All teacher education programs at Dakota State University include a middle level certification embedded into required education coursework; middle school content certification will continue to require completion of specific content courses, and successful completion of Praxis content exam in area of certification.

Students who successfully complete teacher education programs at Dakota State University are eligible to receive a recommendation for the applicable teaching certification in the State of South Dakota. All education graduates are encouraged to apply for South Dakota certification immediately upon completion of their degree.

Teacher education graduates may also be eligible for Dakota State University recommendation for certification in other states, but because teaching certification/licensure requirements vary among states, Dakota State University cannot guarantee the graduate will be immediately certified in a particular state. If you are seeking certification or licensure, you will want to contact the appropriate governing body in your state. The [U.S. Department of Education link](#) will help you learn more about certification in your state, the DSU College of Education (605-256-5177), or the Office of Online Education (online@dsu.edu or 605-256-5049).

Policies

These policies are important documents that provide you with key information regarding academics, enrollment, and student policies and procedures pertinent to your DSU education. To view these various policies, please visit our [DSU student handbook](#).