

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 6 – D (1)

DATE: April 2-3, 2025

SUBJECT

Request to Seek Accreditation – NSU – The Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE)

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 2.3.5](#) – Accreditation

[AAC Guideline 2.3.5.B](#) – Request to Seek Program Accreditation

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

AAC Guideline 2.3.5.B specifies that universities must seek and receive Board approval before applying for initial accreditation for academic programs. Northern State University requests approval to seek accreditation from the following accrediting agency:

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

Program: MS Sports Sciences – Strength and Conditioning Specialization

Advantages: A CASCE accredited program would prepare the student with the knowledge and experience needed to pass the Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS). Starting in 2030, only graduates of CASCE-accredited programs will be able to sit for the CSCS exam, which will become a mandatory credential for coaching strength and conditioning at NCAA institutions and other recognized organizations.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

NSU anticipates a one-time application fee of \$1,000 for initial accreditation and an annual fee of \$1,000. NSU also anticipates \$5,000 in costs for the initial site visit. These costs will be covered by revenue from the administration of third-party exams. The Sports Sciences Department at NSU has required discipline fees for HLTH and PE courses, which would generate the revenue needed to maintain the annual fees associated with CASCE accreditation.

ATTACHMENTS

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

DRAFT MOTION 20250402_6-D(1):

I move to approve NSU’s request to seek accreditation from The Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) for the MS in Sports Sciences – Strength and Conditioning Specialization



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS

Request to Seek Accreditation

Use this form to request permission to seek accreditation of an approved program. Board of Regents (BOR) action is required to seek program accreditation.

UNIVERSITY:	NSU
PROGRAM:	MS Sports Sciences; Strength & Conditioning Specialization
CIP CODE:	
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	Sports Sciences
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	School of Education

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.

Michael Wanous

President (designee) of the University

2/19/2025

Date

1. Level of program seeking accreditation (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

- Certificate

 Associate

 Bachelor's
 Doctoral

 Master's

2. Accrediting Agency:

The Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) is recognized by the National Strength & Conditioning Association (NSCA). Beginning in 2030, graduating from a CASCE-accredited program will be required for students to sit for the Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) examination, a credential necessary to coach strength and conditioning in the NCAA and other recognized institutions.

3. What are the advantages of accreditation?

The NSCA is a well-respected governing body in the field of sports performance. Students, post-graduation, looking to work in fitness/health/sports facilities or coach/train athletes, would benefit from a CASCE accredited program. The accreditation standards are rigorous,

establishing curriculum stability for our students in scientific foundation and practical application. A CASCE accredited program would prepare the student with the knowledge and experience needed to pass the Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS).

Starting in 2030, only graduates of CASCE-accredited programs will be able to sit for the CSCS exam, which will become a mandatory credential for coaching strength and conditioning at NCAA institutions and other recognized organizations. This ensures that professionals entering the field meet consistent educational and industry standards, enhancing their readiness to safeguard athlete health and optimize performance. CASCE-accredited programs also elevate institutional credibility, improve student recruitment, and foster continuous improvement by aligning education with industry demands.

Northern State University has a strong track record of preparing students for careers in strength and conditioning. In the past five years, 20% of graduates from NSU's graduate program have pursued professions in the strength and conditioning field. This highlights the program's role in developing well-prepared professionals who are competitive in a growing industry. With CASCE accreditation becoming increasingly important, institutions like NSU will continue to play a critical role in shaping the future of strength and conditioning education and professional practice.

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

A. Costs involved in undergoing self-study and preparing the application for accreditation:

- \$1000 - Application Fee
- \$5000 – Initial site visit

According to the CASCE website, financial assistance grants are available to help programs offset the expenses associated with accreditation, including self-study and the site visit. Northern State University plans to apply for these grant funds, which can significantly reduce the overall cost of completing both the required self-study and the on-site evaluation.

Out-of-pocket costs related to dues or site visits:

- \$1000 Annual Fee

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

Under the current plan, the base budget is set at \$6,000 if grant funding is not secured and \$1,000 if it is, with an annual budget of \$1,000.

5. What is the source of the revenue needed?

The Sports Sciences Department at Northern State University has requested discipline fees for HLTH and PE courses, which would generate the revenue needed to maintain the annual fees associated with CASCE accreditation.

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

AY 2023-24 – Curriculum Changes Required for meeting Accreditation Standards

AY 2024-25 - Seek NSU and SDBOR approval

October 2025 - Submit CASCE Application

AY 2025-26 - Prepare and submit the CASCE Self-Study

Spring/Fall 2027 - Site Visit to Northern State University