



News Release

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School of Mines Offers Graduate Degree in Emerging Field

ABERDEEN, S.D. – The South Dakota School of Mines & Technology has been approved to offer a master’s degree starting this fall in robotics and intelligent autonomous systems, an emerging technical field on the cutting edge of modern robotics.

The South Dakota Board of Regents approved the new degree program at its meeting today in Aberdeen.

“There are very few programs of this nature in the country,” explained Mines President Robert A. Wharton. “It will be one of fewer than a dozen graduate programs in the United States providing this kind of educational opportunity.”

Wharton said the degree will train students in the latest developing technologies, with the opportunity to focus their studies in computer science, electrical engineering, or mechanical engineering. “We expect to see an increase in the research focus on manufacturing technologies, which will also foster growth in high-tech areas that help us retain an educated and skilled workforce in South Dakota,” he said.

Students will focus on a common core curriculum, while working in a laboratory with faculty and other students on large, grant-funded projects, university officials said. The program covers the essentials of robotics, artificial intelligence, control, communications, sensors, and signal processing.

This research-oriented degree replaces the master of science degree in computer science previously offered by SDM&T; therefore, no new state resources, increased student fees, or additional faculty or lab space were needed to accommodate it. The School of Mines expects the number of new students in the program to grow from 12 to 24 students within three years.