



News Release

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Research Initiatives Move Forward

MADISON, S.D. – Building on initial efforts launched more than a year ago, the South Dakota Board of Regents will ask state legislators to approve three more doctoral-level research degrees and at least one more highly-focused university research center.

Developing this kind of university-level research capacity is critical to the state's economic health, Regents President Harvey C. Jewett said. Gov. Mike Rounds included both initiatives in his FY07 budget, which he presented to lawmakers Dec. 6. The governor recommended \$1.8 million for three new Ph.D. programs at four of the state's public universities, and another \$1 million to create one or two highly-competitive research centers focused on commercializing campus-based research.

“From the beginning, public higher education has been a key player in Gov. Rounds’ 2010 Initiative on economic development,” Jewett said. “With the early successes demonstrated by the first four university research centers that came on line in 2004, it bodes well for further expansion of our efforts.” Jewett said a competitive peer-reviewed application process will again be used to solicit proposals from the universities for additional research centers.

The regents Thursday approved details for the three new doctoral programs which the Legislature will be asked to fund when the session opens in January. They are:

- A doctor of science degree in information systems at Dakota State University. Information systems focuses on theory and practices related to gathering, manipulating, classifying, storing, retrieving, and analyzing recorded data. The new degree will prepare individuals for high-level careers in research, teaching, and corporate or government agency employment.
- A Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering with an emphasis in energy at South Dakota State University. This degree is intended to elevate existing research in electrical engineering, and to focus on particular applications for energy systems and renewable energy technologies.
- A Ph.D. degree in biomedical engineering offered jointly by South Dakota School of Mines & Technology and The University of South Dakota. Biomedical engineering is an emerging field in the delivery of health care, applying engineering and science methods to the analysis of biological and physiological problems.

The \$1.8 million in the governor's recommended budget for the new degrees covers program operations, including salaries, benefits, and operating expenses, as well as financial support for graduate research assistants. Competitive salaries for graduate assistants are critical to attract high-quality students to doctoral programs, regents' officials said.