



News Release

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Regents Approve Facility Plans at NSU and BHSU

PIERRE - The South Dakota Board of Regents Monday approved plans to build a \$7 million technology center addition at Northern State University in Aberdeen as a replacement for existing academic space and to upgrade residence halls at its campuses in Aberdeen and Spearfish.

The 32,000 square-foot addition to the Mewaldt-Jensen Building on the Northern campus will enhance the university's high-tech teaching and learning mission, said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. In 2001, the South Dakota Legislature created the Center for Statewide E-learning at NSU. The university's mission now includes an emphasis on electronic learning across the curriculum and using e-learning technologies to serve K-12 school districts throughout the state.

Most of the new addition will house classroom space. As part of the project, NSU officials plan to demolish Seymour Hall, an old dormitory structure used for offices by some College of Arts and Science faculty. "It is apparent it will be too expensive to economically renovate Seymour Hall for modern use," Jewett said. "The Mewaldt-Jensen addition will include office space on its third floor so that all College of Arts and Science faculty will be located in one building and more accessible to students."

Jewett noted that the tech center addition is not scheduled on the regents' capital improvements plan until 2011, but it could be moved up sooner if feasible.

- The Regents also approved Northern's residence hall plan for major renovations to Kramer and Steele halls. The changes will result in 168-bed suite-style facilities in place of the current 261-bed configuration. Mechanical services and bathroom upgrades will also be made in Jerde and McArthur-Welsh halls. Altogether, gross square footage remains unchanged, but the renovated facilities will house about 630 students in a mix of traditional style, designated single rooms, and double suite-style rooms. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$5.5 million.
- At Black Hills State University in Spearfish, the regents approved a plan that focuses on bathroom renovations and air conditioning in residence halls, identified as the top priorities of students surveyed. BHSU will start

with renovations of all restrooms to enhance student privacy in two halls and complete additional ones as funding permits. Estimated cost is nearly \$800,000.

"Bonding will be required for these projects, along with adjustments in housing rates," said Tad Perry, the regents' executive director. To finance the improvements, room rates at Northern will increase by 34 percent for doubles and 14.8 percent for singles, with a new rate of \$1,350 for suites. At BHSU, the rate increase to cover projected costs will be 8.5 percent for all residential facilities.

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