



News Release

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Regents Advance Plans for New Ph.D. Programs

MADISON, S.D. – In a move to advance university-based research that leads to more economic development for the state, the South Dakota Board of Regents plans six new doctoral-level programs in science and medical fields.

But only three of the six would require additional state funding, said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett.

“In order to create opportunities to commercialize new ideas, you need strong, viable Ph.D. programs,” Jewett said. “South Dakota must establish for itself a broader base of doctoral programs that generate new research, as well as additional education and employment prospects for our youth.”

The regents will ask the South Dakota Legislature to fund three new programs, utilizing \$1,088,164 that Gov. Mike Rounds has recommended in his FY06 budget:

- A Ph.D. in nanoscience and nanoengineering at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology;
- A joint Ph.D. program in computational science and statistics at South Dakota State University and The University of South Dakota; and
- A combined M.D. and Ph.D. program at USD’s medical school.

Additionally, the regents plan to establish three other doctoral programs with existing university resources:

- A Ph.D. degree in nursing at SDSU;
- A Ph.D. in geospatial science and engineering at SDSU; and
- A Ph.D. in atmospheric and environmental sciences at SDSMT.

“It will be necessary to internally redirect some resources, and perhaps seek outside funding, to make the advanced nursing degree and the geospatial and atmospheric sciences degrees possible,” Jewett said. “In reality, the new programs in geospatial science at SDSU and atmospheric science at SDSMT would replace an existing joint degree program the two universities offer in atmospheric, environmental, and water resources.”

The new Ph.D. programs announced Friday are the latest in a planned strategy to increase South Dakota’s profile in research and development. Increasing university research, and translating that

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research into ideas and products that can be marketed, are central points in Gov. Rounds' 2010 economic development initiative.

Earlier this year, the Legislature funded start-up of four highly focused, competitive research centers in the public university system. "Since their creation July 1, these centers are making good progress and will become valuable assets as we implement the state's research initiative," said Dan Farrington, system vice president of research for the Board of Regents.

Farrington said in less than six months' time, significant activity is under way at the research centers:

- The new Center for Infectious Disease Research and Vaccinology at SDSU has already garnered grant awards worth \$505,000. That funding equals 13 percent of the total five-year amount anticipated from the governor's 2010 initiative. The center is conducting its research on technologies and products for infectious diseases in humans and domestic animals.
- The SDSMT Center for Accelerated Applications at the Nanoscale has attracted a private-sector researcher to its staff with extensive technical experience, including commercialization activities. Nanoscale technology focuses on the special properties that exist when materials are scaled down to near-molecular dimensions; the Rapid City center's research emphasizes South Dakota mineral development.
- At the Center for the Research and Development of Light-Activated Materials, negotiations are under way to establish ownership rights to intellectual property arising from research in biological adhesives. The center performs basic and developmental research on materials with light-activated properties. The research is hosted by USD's chemistry department, with Avera Research Institute and SDSU as participating institutions.
- The South Dakota Signal Transduction Center, associated with USD's Cardiovascular Research Institute in Sioux Falls, has grant applications pending worth more than \$12.6 million. Another \$214,500 grant from the American Hospital Association was funded. Cardiovascular disease and cancer are the most frequent causes of death in modern society. This center examines the pathways that regulate cell growth and differentiation, cell death, response to stress, and the maintenance of constant physiological conditions.