



News Release

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BHSU Approved for First-Ever Graduate Degree in Science

BROOKINGS, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents has approved a master of science degree in integrative genomics at Black Hills State University, signaling a new direction for master’s degrees offered by the Spearfish university.

“This is Black Hills State’s first master’s degree in the sciences,” Regents President Harvey C. Jewett said. “The deep underground lab project at Homestake is right down the road, and there will be excellent opportunities there for genomics research. At a time when there is substantial state interest in expanding research and graduate education at South Dakota public universities, this degree is an excellent fit for our system and for BHSU in particular,” he said.

Black Hills State already offers master’s degree programs in education and business. The genomics degree will help recruit students for graduate-level study in a technology-rich area of emerging science, Jewett said. “This program is likely to have significant benefits for BHSU, with minimal risk to existing system programs,” Jewett said.

Integrative genomics is a new area of biological research that seeks to place the functional significance of an organism’s many genes into an ecological and evolutionary context. In a practical sense, integrative genomics allows scientists to understand the success story that each species represents.

University officials plan to offer the new degree starting this fall. Five students are expected to enroll in the first year, with an average of four students graduating each year once the program is fully operational. No new state resources were requested to develop or implement the degree, Jewett noted. The university also will not seek any new or increased student fees to implement the program.