



# News Release

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## **Three Universities Cooperatively Plan for Graduate Physics Degree**

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Three of South Dakota’s public universities want to jointly offer a new graduate-level degree in physics, building on the national visibility of the state’s underground science and engineering laboratory at the former Homestake Gold Mine.

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, South Dakota State University, and The University of South Dakota received permission from the Board of Regents this week to prepare a plan for a new master’s degree in physics. The universities will come back to the board later for final program approval.

“The high visibility of the Sanford Underground Laboratory at Homestake will lead to recruitment of new, talented students to our state,” said Robert T. Tad Perry, the regents’ executive director. “Students in our region will have the opportunity to participate in world-class science taking place at the lab. Being able to offer a graduate degree in physics is a strong complement to the research activities and associated economic development that will occur in South Dakota.

“The Sanford lab will host some of the world’s most preeminent physicists,” Perry said. “These researchers will need graduate students on site to help them carry out their research, and this type of degree program provides that local talent pool.”

Officials at the three universities say they plan to reallocate existing resources and apply for other sources of external funding to develop and operate the program. No new state resources or additional student fees are being requested, nor will any additional facilities be needed to sustain the program. It is estimated that 10 to 13 students would be enrolled in the degree program annually once it is fully operational.