



News Release

Contacts: Robert T. Tad Perry, Executive Director
tadp@sdbor.edu

Janelle Toman, Director of Information & Institutional Research
janellet@sdbor.edu

T: 605.773.3455

F: 605.773.5320

www.sdbor.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, December 19, 2008

New Academic Programs Authorized at Public Universities

MADISON, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents approved three new degree programs at public universities, including a cooperative plan for a graduate degree in physics, as well as a doctorate in nursing practice and a master’s degree in social work.

Master of Science Degree in Physics – SDSM&T, SDSU, USD

Under a plan approved Friday, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and The University of South Dakota would each be able to award the M.S. degree in physics, but would share responsibility for course delivery and students enrolled at one institution would take courses regularly taught by faculty from the other universities.

“Under this model, we are able to implement the program without asking the state for additional resources,” explained Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “We are convinced that this degree will strongly support high-quality science and engineering education, as well as strengthen the important educational partnership that we have with the deep underground science lab at Homestake.” The degree will be offered beginning fall 2009.

Doctor of Nursing Practice – SDSU

The board approved a South Dakota State University proposal for a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. The DNP degree may become the national entry degree for nurse practitioners in the future. The program was approved for delivery on campus in Brookings and at off-campus centers in Sioux Falls and Rapid City as demand warrants.

The program requires completion of 80 credit hours for new nurse practitioners. By the doctoral program’s fifth year, SDSU estimates it may be graduating 20 new nurse practitioners a year. As part of the state’s ongoing health care workforce initiative, this degree will focus on increasing the number of highly-trained nurse practitioners in order to meet a growing demand for health care workers across South Dakota.

Master of Social Work – USD

The University of South Dakota proposal for a master’s degree in social work was approved. The university may implement the program only if new external resources can be found. “We are convinced of the need for this program, and recognize that South Dakota is the only state in the country without a master’s degree program in this field,” said Regents Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry. “However, the university simply cannot get this program off the ground given current funding levels.”

New Degree Programs – 2

Perry noted that the board had included \$474,500 for the program in its budget request to the governor. Due to the state's budget constraints, these funds were not included in the governor's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2010. "We have agreed to approve the program now, so that if and when funding does become available, we can be ready to move," Perry said.

The South Dakota chapter of the National Association of Social Workers recommended establishing the master's degree program to respond to the increased demand for master's-level trained social workers by employers throughout South Dakota.