



# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Friday, April 3, 2009

## **Dakota State Creates Online Health Informatics Degree**

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Dakota State University will begin offering a master’s degree in health informatics online starting this fall. The South Dakota Board of Regents approved the new degree program, which will utilize Internet delivery.

Health informatics relates to the science of information, the practice of information processing, and the engineering of information systems. The new degree is intended to prepare individuals for health care careers in such occupations as chief information officer, corporate health information manager, data analytics, health information application developer, and health information management specialist.

“A graduate-level program in health informatics will facilitate real-time health care delivery and support critical health care-related decision making in South Dakota,” said DSU President Douglas Knowlton. “We have a long history at Dakota State of providing health information technology education, and we see this degree as the next logical step in preparing our state’s workforce.

“We expect to produce graduates who will be in very high demand,” Knowlton said. “Many of the leading health care institutions in South Dakota have announced information technology initiatives, and are increasing their expenditures in this area.”

By redirecting some existing resources, Dakota State is able to offer this degree program without requesting new state funds or increased student fees, he said. DSU expects to graduate about 10 students each year once the program is up and running.

The regents also approved DSU’s request to establish a Center for Advancement of Health Information Technology, which is related to the new degree offering. This center will work with the South Dakota eHealth Collaborative and industry partners to provide research and leadership in shaping the use of information technology in the health care field. The center also will provide information about standards and trends, as well as conduct workshops and seminars for the health information technology industry.