



# News Release

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## **New Associate Degrees Approved for BHSU and NSU**

PIERRE, S.D. – With the goal of producing a more highly educated workforce for the state, the South Dakota Board of Regents approved new associate degree programs at Black Hills State University and Northern State University.

The new degrees are an associate of science in advanced manufacturing technology at BHSU and an associate of arts in applied gerontology at NSU. No new state resources or additional student fees were requested to implement these programs.

The associate degree in advanced manufacturing technology builds on Black Hills State's long history of instruction in industrial arts and industrial technology, dating back more than 100 years. The degree, to be delivered in Rapid City and Yankton, is designed to respond to the workforce needs of manufacturing employers and to prepare students for new careers in the manufacturing sector.

At Northern State, the associate degree in applied gerontology will prepare students for careers serving the rapidly aging population of South Dakota and the upper Midwest. More than 14 percent of the state's population is over 65, and South Dakota ranks third in the nation for its proportion of citizens over age 85.

Paul Gough, director of policy and planning for the Board of Regents, said the associate degree in gerontology also provides a beginning foundation for students interested in pursuing a four-year degree in the field. He noted that Northern State has a history of providing instruction in this and related fields, including a minor in gerontology offered since 1981 and a certificate in applied gerontology approved last year.

Northern State officials plan to offer the A.A. in applied gerontology in three communities—Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City—and by distance delivery.

The South Dakota Legislature has authorized associate degree delivery at both BHSU and NSU for many years as part of the institutions' statutory missions, Gough said.