



# News Release

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## **Joint Ph.D. Degree in Physics Approved**

MADISON, S.D. – Three public universities in South Dakota plan to cooperate to offer the Ph.D. 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 and Technology, The University of South Dakota, and South Dakota State University would have individual authority to award the Ph.D. in physics. Faculty from three other state universities—Black Hills State, Dakota State, and Northern State—would also assist in teaching courses and serving on dissertation committees.

While the South Dakota Board of Regents approved the new program request Friday, the program’s fate ultimately rests with state lawmakers, as it will be implemented only with state funding. Gov. Mike Rounds has recommended \$970,000 to launch the program, along with \$614,700 in contributions from the three universities, and another \$811,919 deferred to the 2012 budget year.

“The conversion of the mine into a deep underground science laboratory provides incredible opportunities for higher education and research in this state,” said Regents President Terry Baloun. “Physics will play a predominant role in the research under way at the lab. It is clear that the scope of work necessary for large-scale underground experiments demands the kind of time and experience that only Ph.D. graduate students can provide,” he said.

“These exciting research opportunities, combined with a strong Ph.D. program in physics, will serve as a powerful recruitment tool to bring new, talented students to our state,” said Jack R. Warner, the regents’ executive director and CEO. “Our own students as well will have the chance to participate in the world-class science taking place. This is a strong complement to the research and related economic development that will occur in South Dakota.”

SDSM&T, USD, and SDSU already have a history of close collaboration in this area. The three universities have shared courses in their physics bachelor’s programs for more than 10 years and are cooperating to offer the master’s degree in physics that will provide foundation coursework for the Ph.D. program.