



News Release

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New Science Degrees Approved at Two South Dakota Universities

MADISON, S.D. – The newest undergraduate degree offerings in the public university system focus on science fields. The South Dakota Board of Regents this week approved a bachelor's degree in medical biology at **The University of South Dakota** and an associate degree in biotechnology at **Northern State University**. Both will be available to students starting this fall.

At USD, the B.S. degree in medical biology is designed to prepare students for admission into medical school and other healthcare professional programs such as dentistry, physician assistant, physical therapy, and podiatry. The new program, reflecting the latest national trends in medical education, was developed collaboratively between the Sanford School of Medicine and the university's College of Arts and Sciences.

The degree will deliver a pre-medical curriculum that is more relevant in preparing tomorrow's physicians and other professionals in the healthcare workforce, while also providing students with a strong background in the biological sciences, university officials said.

At Northern State, university officials have been working closely with industry leaders in the Aberdeen area to develop the associate of science degree in biotechnology. It will prepare students for entry-level positions in the growing biotechnology industry in South Dakota and the region.

Biotechnology combines the fields of genetics, molecular biology, biochemistry, microbiology, and cell biology and links them to applications in such fields as chemical engineering, information technology, and bio-robotics. University officials said a strong background in biotechnology is becoming a necessity in clinical and research laboratories across the nation.

The regents also approved four new minors at **USD**, each requiring at least 18 credit hours of study. The minors are:

- Conservation and biodiversity, equipping non-biology majors with an enhanced set of academic and practical workplace skills in the field of conservation.
- Finance, offering business majors additional expertise that is recognized by current or prospective employers as having completed specific training in finance.
- Marketing, which will train students to implement marketing actions in support of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations.

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- Sustainability, which positions graduates with increasingly prominent and in-demand skills that respond to population growth, consumption of natural resources, and climate change.

In other action, the board approved a request by **South Dakota School of Mines and Technology** to begin offering its existing master's degree in construction management via the Internet. Offering this program online will contribute to development of the state's construction industry workforce, by allowing students to earn an advanced degree while remaining employed and living in their home communities.

A new certificate program in journalism was also approved at **Black Hills State University**. Certificates usually require fewer credit hours to complete than a minor. They are developed by packaging a small set of courses that allow students to develop expertise within a focused area of study, addressing market and workforce development needs. The primary audience for this certificate is self publishers and others involved in mass media careers.