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BHSU to Offer Applied Health Sciences Degree

PIERRE, S.D. –Black Hills State University students whose ultimate goal may be a degree in nursing or other healthcare programs now have a new associate degree designed just for them.

Averaging about 45 pre-nursing students enrolled annually, BHSU has had a long history of preparing students for admission into nursing programs offered elsewhere. The new associate degree in applied health sciences, approved by the South Dakota Board of Regents, will offer students all the general education and core classes required for admission into nursing programs at South Dakota State University and The University of South Dakota, as well as for other bachelor degree-level healthcare programs.

The entire program will be delivered at University Center-Rapid City to accommodate more students who do not wish to relocate or commute to a residential campus. Graduates with the two-year associate degree may also choose to continue on at BHSU and complete another bachelor's degree within the system's 120 credit-hour degree requirements.

“Recognizing that registered nurses, medical technologists, and other health professionals are in high demand, this degree is one more way that Black Hills State University contributes to the healthcare workforce by helping students complete courses required to advance in their careers,” said Jack Warner, the regents' executive director and CEO.

The university estimates about 25 new students will enroll in the program when it launches this fall, with another 35 anticipated a year later.

In other board action today:

- The regents approved a request by The University of South Dakota to beginning offering online its existing master's degree in counseling and psychology in education, with a specialization in human development and educational psychology. Projected demand is growing for counseling professionals in child care, social and human services, and education, and the expanded accessibility and convenience of online delivery allows for greater response to this demand, regents' officials said.