

Contacts: Jack R. Warner, Executive Director and CEO
jack.warner@sdbor.edu

Janelle Toman, Director of Communications
Janelle.toman@sdbor.edu

Telephone: (605) 773-3455

Fax: (605) 773-5320

www.sdbor.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, December 4, 2014

USD to Offer Occupational Therapy Doctorate; Expands Off-Campus Programs in Pierre and Sioux Falls

RAPID CITY, S.D. – A new doctorate degree in occupational therapy has been created at the University of South Dakota, responding to the profession's efforts to move the entry degree for occupational therapists from the master's to doctorate level. The South Dakota Board of Regents approved the new degree offering Thursday.

Plans also call for delivery of an online clinical doctorate for current practitioners and previous USD master's degree graduates who wish to transition to the doctorate-level degree. Regents' officials say occupational therapy programs across the country are moving quickly to doctorate degree programs.

There is high demand for USD's current M.S. degree in occupational therapy. About 150 students apply annually for 28 seats in the program. USD projects it will graduate 28 students each year from its doctorate program after full implementation.

In other action, the Board of Regents approved:

- USD's request to deliver the bachelor of science in nursing degree at **Capital University Center in Pierre**. USD currently offers a two-year associate degree at CUC, but that program will transition by fall 2016 into the bachelor's degree program. University officials say this change aligns with a growing demand for more highly-trained nurses, especially in healthcare leadership positions. USD expects to graduate 16 students annually after full implementation.
- A request from USD to offer the paramedic specialization within the B.S. degree in health sciences at the **Health Sciences Center in Sioux Falls**. Offering this specialization in Sioux Falls aligns with the location of most students and faculty and provides improved access to laboratory and simulation experiences for students. An estimated 40 students will graduate with the specialization after full implementation.