



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Universities Add New Minors in Chinese and Russian Studies; Offer New Certificates and Specializations to Meet Workforce Trends

VERMILLION, S.D. – New minors to help graduates navigate language and cultural understanding in China and Russia were approved this week by the South Dakota Board of Regents. These programs were part of several academic requests from public universities aimed at meeting emerging employment trends across South Dakota.

The minor in **Chinese** at **Northern State University** will build language skills in an area of growing demand, according to NSU officials. More students are interested in teaching, international business, government positions, and Chinese study abroad options. The 20 credit-hour minor will be offered on the Aberdeen campus and through online delivery.

At the **University of South Dakota**, a minor in **Russian studies** will build on Russian language and history courses, providing students with intermediate language knowledge and a historical and cultural understanding of Russia. USD officials say the number of Russian speakers in this country has nearly quadrupled since 1980 and continued growth in this field of study is expected. This campus-based minor requires 20 credit hours to complete.

Other academic requests approved by the Board of Regents include:

- **University of South Dakota** – Undergraduate certificates, one in **forensic anthropology** and one in **professional ethics**. Certificate programs usually require fewer credit hours than a minor, designed by packaging a small set of courses that allow students to develop focused expertise.
 - The forensics certificate will provide skills useful to police and forensic work, analyzing crime scenes, processing large data sets, and identification of human remains. This certificate may serve as a credential for those interested in careers as forensic science technicians, a field projected to grow by 26 percent in South Dakota through 2026.
 - The certificate in professional ethics offers broad training in ethics focused on professional work settings. Designed as a ‘stand-alone’ certificate that could be added to various degrees, USD created this academic program in response to employer surveys supporting a need for workers with professional ethics training in many fields.

- **South Dakota State University**

- A minor in **land valuation and rural real estate** will appeal to students majoring in agriculture, business economics, construction management, geography, and other fields. This 19 credit-hour minor prepares graduates with skills in economics, finance, mathematics, and law for careers in bank lending, real estate investment trusts, farm and estate succession planning, insurance, construction management, and economic development and planning.
- A specialization in **geographic information sciences** will be an option for students studying for the master of science degree in geography at SDSU. This specialized course of study prepares graduates to use and apply geographic information systems, cartography, remote sensing, global positioning systems, and spatial statistics.