

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: III – D (2)

DATE: April 1-2, 2015

SUBJECT: Intent to Plan: SDSU BS in Natural Resources Law Enforcement

South Dakota State University (SDSU) requests authorization to develop a proposal for a major in Natural Resources Law Enforcement. The program would prepare students for careers as conservation officers, Federal wildlife officers, park rangers, and game wardens. The proposed undergraduate program is a collaboration between the Department of Natural Resource Management and the Department of Sociology and Rural Studies with courses offered from both departments.

University Mission and System Strategic Goals

Board of Regents Policy 1:10:2 and SDCL 13-58-1 establish the mission of SDSU as the state’s comprehensive land grant university and to provide undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, human sciences, nursing, pharmacy, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine.

The proposed program aligns with SDSU’s strategic plan, IMPACT 2018. In addition, the proposed program is consistent with the Board of Regents 2014-2020 Strategic Plan, including growing the number of undergraduate degrees awarded as described in Goal 1 and

(Continued)

RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Authorize SDSU to develop a proposal for a B.S. in Natural Resources Law Enforcement with the following conditions:

1. The university will research existing curricula, consult with experts concerning the curriculum, and provide assurance in the proposal that the program is consistent with current national standards and with the needs of employers.
2. The proposal will define the specific knowledge, skills, and competencies to be acquired through the program, will outline how each will be obtained in the curriculum and will identify the specific measures to be used to determine whether individual students have attained the expected knowledge, skills, and competencies.
3. The university will not request new state resources and the program proposal will identify the sources and amounts of all funds needed to operate the program and the impact of reallocations on existing programs.

increasing pass rates on certification exams (i.e., law enforcement academy exams) as described in Goal 2.

Related Programs in the System

No Regental institutions offer the proposed major. The University of South Dakota (USD) offers majors in Criminal Justice and SDSU and Northern State University (NSU) offer minors in Criminal Justice. The proposed program in Natural Resources Law Enforcement differs in its specialization and related natural resources curriculum.

Workforce Need, Student Demand, Projected Graduates

The US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates law enforcement employment, including fish and game wardens, will grow by 5% by 2022. The program proposal is a response to discussions with personnel at South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks (SDGFP) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) expressing difficulties in finding qualified applicants for natural resources law enforcement positions. Currently, only four institutions in the nation offer a similar degree. SDSU estimates thirty graduates per year after full implementation.

Board Policy

SDSU is not requesting any exceptions to Board Policy.

Off Campus and Distance Delivery

SDSU does not anticipate requesting authorization for off campus or distance delivery at this time.

Budget and Resources

SDSU does not request any new State resources to implement or maintain the proposed program. SDSU will fund the program through reallocation of existing resources.

**South Dakota Board of Regents
Intent to Plan for a Baccalaureate Major in Natural Resources
Law Enforcement**

UNIVERSITY:	SDSU
DEGREE(S) AND TITLE OF PROGRAM:	Bachelor of Science, Natural Resources Law Enforcement
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	Fall 2015

University Approval

To the Board and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this intent to plan, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.



President of the University

2-4-2015

Date

After approval by the President, a signed copy of the proposal should be transmitted to the Executive Director. Only after Executive Director review should the proposal be posted on the university web site and the Board staff and the other universities notified of the URL.

1. What is the general nature of the proposed program? What is the expected demand for graduates in South Dakota? What is the need for the proposed program?

South Dakota State University (SDSU) requests authorization to develop a proposal for a major in Natural Resources Law Enforcement. The intent is to develop a program that would prepare students for careers in natural resources law enforcement as conservation officers, Federal wildlife officers, park rangers, and game wardens.

The proposed undergraduate program would be developed through an interdisciplinary collaboration between the Department of Natural Resource Management and the Department of Sociology and Rural Studies. Courses will be offered from both Departments.

The University does not intend to request new state resources. The program will be funded with redirection of existing resources. The degree will be delivered using resource redirections and self-support tuition revenue.

The proposed program supports the South Dakota Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020:

- *Goal 1 – Student Success*
 - *Grow the number of undergraduate and graduate degrees awarded* – This new program will provide an opportunity for increased number of graduates by recruiting new students to SDSU.
 - *Improve system first year retention rates* – This new program will increase first year and overall retention rates of current Department students by more closely aligning with student career goals.
 - *Increase the number of degrees awarded to Native American students* – The

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- program will increase degrees awarded to Native American students by offering a tribal law specialization.
- *Expand educational access* by :
 - Expanding collaborations with tribal colleges through the development of a tribal law specialization.
 - Improving transfer articulation agreements with technical institutes and tribal colleges and universities through the development of 2+2 articulation agreements.
 - Encouraging campuses to create innovative programs to attract and retain in SD, more non-resident students – the proposed program will be one of only 5 bachelor degree programs in the country. This would serve to recruit out-of-state students who could be retained in SD through employment with SD Department of Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) as well as federal agencies located in the state and region.
 - *Goal 2 – Academic Quality and Performance*
 - *Improve the pass rates on licensure and certification exams* – The proposed program will increase the pass rates of students taking law enforcement academy entrance and final exams.
 - *Goal 3 – Research and Economic Development*
 - *Economic Development* – Contribute to the state’s workforce and economic development. The proposed program will contribute to keeping SDSU graduates in the state through employment with SD Department of Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) as well as federal agencies (i.e., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]) located in the state and region. Additionally, Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoors has been identified as one of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development Key Industries in the state of South Dakota.

Expected Workforce Demand for Graduates

According to the United States Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics¹, employment as police and detectives (includes fish and game wardens) is expected to grow by 5% from 2012 to 2022. Additionally, employment as zoologists and wildlife biologists² is expected to grow by 5% from 2012 to 2022. Expected employment growth (new jobs) for each category is 1,000. The overall law enforcement job replacement rate is projected to be 361,100 jobs; 1,900 for fish and game wardens³. The 2012-2022 replacement rate for zoologists and wildlife biologists is projected to be 5,700 jobs.

Background research into current conservation officer/game warden/park ranger job vacancies nationwide indicated the current employment pool consisted of vacancies at more than 50% of state game agencies as well as more than 100 openings with federal agencies such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Army Corps of Engineers.

¹ <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/police-and-detectives.htm>

² <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/zoologists-and-wildlife-biologists.htm>

³ http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_110.htm

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Need for Proposed Program

The proposed program is essential to meet the needs of stakeholder agencies which, in turn, support natural resource management activities across the state, region, and nation. The proposed program would fill a void in natural resource law enforcement education; currently there are only 4 institutions (Unity College, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Southwestern Oklahoma University, and Texas Tech University) offering B.S. degrees in this field of study, none in the Regental system.

Information obtained from SDGFP indicated consistent ongoing conservation officer vacancies over the past 15+ years (A. Alban, SDGFP Law Enforcement Program Administrator, personal communication). In discussions with SDGFP, SDSU was informed of the difficulty they have experienced in finding suitable candidates for vacant conservation officer positions. Many applicants do not possess the necessary academic training to either enter or succeed in the law enforcement academy; students are lacking instruction in criminal law and procedures, constitutional law, domestic violence and social issues, and environmental laws and policies. For instance, the requirements for the position of conservation officer with SDGFP requires knowledge of federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to conservation, criminal and conservation laws, search and seizure, use of force, methodologies of arrest, forensic investigative procedures, and rules of evidence in addition to significant knowledge of wildlife and fisheries (South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, Conservation Officer Position – Class Code 90312). Current Wildlife and Fisheries majors would need to take an additional 7-9 classes (21-27 credits) to meet the criminal and law requirements, adding 1-2 semesters to the current 4-year degree program. The proposed program in Natural Resources Law Enforcement would allow students to obtain necessary natural resource science, criminal justice, and sociology courses in 4 years.

State agencies vary in their degree requirement to become a Conservation Officer; however, the majority (15) of agencies surveyed (25) require a B.S. degree that includes course work in natural resource sciences, criminal justice, and sociology. Of the five requiring only an Associate's Degree, three indicate that a B.S. degree will enhance employment opportunities.

Enforcement agents with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) expressed similar concerns regarding preparedness of students for federal careers in natural resources law enforcement (B. Keller, USFWS Refuge Law Enforcement Officer, personal communication). Candidates with law/criminal justice degrees that enter employment as an Enforcement Agent for USFWS have limited upward mobility due to a lack of natural resource coursework. For instance, the federal requirements for the Series 0485 (Wildlife Refuge Management) position (logical upward progression for easement officers; B. Keller, personal communication) requires at least 9 hours in zoology, 6 hours of wildlife courses (i.e., mammalogy, ornithology, animal ecology), 9 hours of botany, and 3 hours of conservation biology. The proposed program in Natural Resources Law Enforcement would meet these requirements.

The proposed program would offer opportunities for 2+2 articulation agreements with tribal colleges in South Dakota. Possible collaborations include the Associate of Sciences degrees in Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Environmental Sciences at Sinte Gleska University, Associate of Science degrees in Natural Science, Natural Science – Life Science

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Emphasis, and Interdisciplinary Environmental Science at Sisseton Wahpeton College, and Associate of Science degrees in Natural Resources, Environmental Science, and Criminal Justice at Sitting Bull College.

2. What is the relationship of the proposed program to the University's mission as provided in South Dakota statute and Board of Regents Policy?

The statutory mission of South Dakota State University in SDCL 13-58-1:

Designated as South Dakota's Land-grant University, South Dakota State University, formerly the State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, located at Brookings, in Brookings County, shall be under the control of the Board of Regents and shall provide undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, human sciences, nursing and pharmacy, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine.

Board Policy 1:10:2 South Dakota State University Mission Statement provides:

The legislature established South Dakota State University as the Comprehensive Land Grant University to meet the needs of the State and region by providing undergraduate and graduate programs of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education in agriculture, education, engineering, human sciences, nursing, pharmacy, and other courses or programs as the Board of Regents may determine (SDCL 13-58-1).

The Board implemented SDCL 13-58-1 by authorizing South Dakota State University to serve students and clients through teaching, research, and extension activities. The University's primary goal is to provide undergraduate and graduate programs at the freshman through the doctoral levels. The university complements this goal by conducting nationally competitive strategic research and scholarly and creative activities. Furthermore, South Dakota State University facilitates the transference of knowledge through the Cooperative Extension Service with a presence in every county and through other entities, especially to serve the citizens of South Dakota.

South Dakota State University is unique within the South Dakota System of Higher Education because of its comprehensive land grant mission. The mission is implemented through integrated programs of instruction, the Cooperative Extension Service, the Agricultural Experiment Station, and numerous auxiliary and laboratory services.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Law Enforcement supports the mission of SDSU and is well-aligned with IMPACT 2018⁴. Specifically, in the area of:

- *Goal #1 – Academic Excellence - Promote academic excellence through quality programs, engaged learners and an innovative teaching and learning environment.*
- *Goal #3 – Outreach - Extend the reach and depth of the University by developing strategic programs and collaborations.*

⁴ <http://sdstate.edu/impact2018/>

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3. Are there any related programs in the regental system? If there are related programs, why should the proposed program be added? If there are no related programs within the system, enter "None."

No academic programs within the Regental system offer the proposed major. However, the University of South Dakota offers a B.A. and a B.S. in Criminal Justice. Additionally, South Dakota State University and Northern State University offer a minor in Criminal Justice. The proposed program in Natural Resources Law Enforcement would differ from these programs in that students would receive specific coursework and obtain hands-on experience in a natural resources curriculum required for employment as a Conservation Officer.

4. Are there related programs at public colleges and universities in Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming?⁵ If there are related programs in these states list below under each state and explain why the proposed program is needed in South Dakota. If there are no related programs in a state, enter "None" for that state.

Minnesota
Vermillion Community College, Wildland/Wildlife Law Enforcement, A.S. Degree The program at Vermillion Community College is a 2-year Associate of Science degree. The majority of state and federal agencies require a 4-year degree at the time of application for employment as a Conservation Officer, Game Warden, or Park Ranger. Vermillion has an articulation agreement with the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point for this field of study.
North Dakota (none)
Montana (none)
Wyoming (none)

Additional Information: There are no related programs at public colleges and universities in Nebraska or Iowa.

5. Are students expected to be new to the university or redirected from other programs? How many majors are expected in the first years of the program? How many graduates are expected?

It is expected that students for this new major will be both new to the University and redirected from other programs. A portion of the students currently enrolled in the Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences major and students currently enrolled in the Criminal Justice minor would be interested in the proposed new major. The interest in conservation officer/park ranger/game warden as a career has been evident among incoming freshman during New Student Orientation (NSO). The Department NSO advisor for the past two summers polled incoming students as to their career interest; more than 30% indicated they were interested in pursuing a career in wildlife law enforcement. Additional interest has been documented in the initial wildlife and fisheries course

⁵ This question addresses opportunities available through Minnesota Reciprocity and the Western Undergraduate Exchange in adjacent states. List only programs at the same degree level as the proposed program. For example, if the proposed program is a baccalaureate major, then list only related baccalaureate majors in the other states and do not include associate or graduate programs.

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mandatory for all students in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. At the beginning of the fall 2014 semester, program faculty initiated an online career survey of the WL220 Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries Science course. This class is composed primarily of incoming freshmen and transfer students. The results indicated that 56 of 99 (57%) students (wildlife and fisheries majors) were interested in becoming a conservation officer/park ranger. This percent was heavily weighted by the freshman class; 44 of 56 (77%) enrolled freshman selected this career path. Additionally, students were surveyed in the WL420 Wildlife Law and Enforcement course (a Human Dimensions elective in NRM) as to interest in becoming a conservation officer; approximately 25% (16 of 63) of the class indicated their interest in the new program.

Assuming that the proposed program is as successful as those at Texas Tech University and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, long-term program enrollment could be expected to approach 150 students. Given the current demand of existing Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences students (~50 students redirected), the difference (100 students) would represent new student enrollment to the University.

Therefore, a conservative estimate for the initial cohort is 40 students, including incoming freshman and sophomores who change their major from Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences.

Estimated Enrollment Target	Academic Years				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Students in the major (fall)	40	60	75	85	100
Completions by graduates	0	0	15	30	35

6. Does the university intend to seek authorization to deliver this entire program at any off-campus locations? If yes, enter location(s) and intended start date(s). Does the university intend to seek authorization to deliver this entire program by distance technology? If yes, identify delivery method(s) and intended start date(s).

Off-campus	No
Distance delivery	No

7. What are the University’s plans for obtaining the resources needed to implement the program? Indicate “yes” or “no” in the columns below.

	Development/Start-up	Long-term Operation
Reallocate existing resources	Yes	Yes
Apply for external resources	No	No
Ask Board to seek new State resources	No	No
Ask Board to approve new or increased student fee	No	No

The courses proposed to be used in the undergraduate program will come from courses currently being offered in existing undergraduate programs in the SDSU Colleges of Agriculture and

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Biological Sciences and Arts and Sciences. The students for this proposed undergraduate program will help bolster the enrollment in existing courses.

8. Curriculum Example: Provide (as Appendix A) the curriculum of a similar program at another college or university. *The Appendix should provide the required and elective courses in the program. Catalog pages or web materials may be used. Identify the college or university and explain why the program may be used as one model when the proposed program is developed.*

The curriculum will be based on three successful B.S. programs that currently offer this major: Unity College, the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP) (Appendix A), and Texas Tech University (Appendix B). These programs currently are very successful, with >150 students in the majors at Texas Tech University and UWSP (numbers for Unity College were unavailable). Program faculty met with enforcement officials from SDGFP and USFWS to select courses that met the academic qualifications required for employment with state and federal agencies.

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Appendix A: Curriculum Example

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Additional information regarding the Bachelor of Science in Resource Management Law Enforcement program at University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point may be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/Pages/default.aspx>

Degree Requirements:

120 Credits

Credits	B.S. - Resource Management Law Enforcement
3	GEP ENGL 101
3	GEP Communication 101
3	GEP ENGL 202
3	NRES 368 Oral Communication
4	Quantitative Analysis
5	BIO 130 Plant Biology
5	BIO 160 Animal Biology
5	GEOG 101 Physical Environment (NS)
5	CHEM 101 Intro to Chem (NS)
3	Humanities Course
3	Arts Course
3	GEP Historical Perspectives (GA)
3	Directed Elective - NRES 381, 391, PHIL 315, POLI 212, or SOC 230
3	Directed Elective - NRES 372, 465, POLI 304 or 305
3	Directed Elective - NRES 381, 391, PHIL 315, POLI 212, or SOC 230
3	Directed Elective - NRES 381, 391, PHIL 315, POLI 212, or SOC 230
3	NRES 150 People, Resources, and the Biosphere
3	NRES 151 Ecological Basis for NRM
4	NRES 251 Intro to Soil and Water Resources
4	NRES 250 Intro to Fisheries, Forestry, and Wildlife
3	NRES 474 Integrated Resource Management
3	NRES 320 NRES and Public Relations
3	NRES 392 Environmental Law Enforcement Theory and Principles
12	Environmental Law Enforcement Recruit School
3	NRES 473 or 341 Resource Policy Law or Sustainable Energy Policy
12	Minor credits or Electives
6	Science and Natural Env. Elective
1	Wellness
6	General Elective

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Appendix B: Curriculum Example

Texas Tech University

Additional information regarding the Bachelor of Science in Conservation Law Enforcement program at Texas Tech University may be found at:

http://www.depts.ttu.edu/officialpublications/catalog/ag_nrm.php#Undergrad

Degree Requirements:

120 Credits

Credits	B.S. - Conservation Law Enforcement
3	ENGL 1301 Composition I
3	ENGL 1302 Composition II
4	SPEECH 1311
3	MATH 1314 College Algebra
4	BIOL 1406 Biology (Natural Science)
4	BIOL 1407 Biology II (Natural Science)
8	Advanced Upper Level Biology
3	HIST 1301 History of US to 1876
3	HIST 1302 History of US since 1876
3	SOC 1301 Introduction to Sociology
3	GOVT 2305 American Government, Organization
3	GOVT 2306 American Government, Functions
3	Arts Course
3	Humanities Course
3	NRM 2301 Wildlife Conservation Management
3	NRM 2302 Environmental Science
3	NRM 2305 Intro to Freshwater Ecology and Fish
5	NRM 3501 Rangeland, Forest, and Wetland Plants
22	NRM Electives (21-24 credits)
3	NRM 4320 Natural Resource Policy and Planning
3	NRM 4315 Spatial Analysis of Natural Resource Management
3	CRIJ 1301 Intro to Criminal Justice
3	CRIJ 1306 Court Systems and Practices
3	CRIJ 1310 Foundations of Criminal Law
3	CRIJ 2313 Correctional System and Practices
3	CRIJ 2328 Police Systems and Practices
3	CRIJ 2314 Criminal Investigation
3	NRM 4311 Natural Resources Law
4	NRM 3407 Wildlife Investigation Techniques
3	NRM 4000 Internship