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SOUTH DAKOTA



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# News

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## Bike Share Program Planned for Campus



Senior biology major Charlie Nearman, English faculty member Paul Formisano, and Cal Petersen, Vermillion community member, are part of a group working to bring a bike-sharing program to the USD campus.

VERMILLION, S.D. -- Students at the University of South Dakota could be closer to having a bike share program, thanks to a \$4,850 grant from the Student Government Association's Green Initiative Fund.

The student-run Sustainability Club will use the grant to start working on a project that could eventually include new bike racks on campus and in the community with up to 50 shared unisex bicycles.

“Biking is really an efficient way to get around campus,” said Charlie Nearman, a senior biology major from Jefferson, South Dakota, who wrote the grant proposal for the Sustainability Club. “And building more bike racks on campus is more cost-efficient than creating another parking lot.”


Bike share programs are increasingly popular on college campuses and in cities. Such programs allow shared use of bicycles for a short period of time. Riders often pay an annual membership fee to use the bikes.

A committee of university and community members is also involved in the project. Cal Petersen, a community activist, retired Methodist minister and avid cyclist, approached the sustainability faculty last year with the idea to develop a bike share.

“We would like to alleviate the parking problem on campus and make Vermillion a better place for cyclists,” Petersen said. His group, “Making a Lighter Footprint,” will help raise additional funding to purchase bikes, install bike racks and pursue efforts to create bike paths and bike-friendly streets in the community.

Paul Formisano, an English professor and Sustainability Program faculty member, commutes to campus each day by bicycle and is researching bike models and costs. He said a survey sent out last semester showed an interest in such a program, particularly from international students, who often don’t own cars.

Students in the sustainability capstone class will take on the Bike Share Program as one of their projects this semester. Still to be determined are how to manage the check-out system, setting time limits on bike use, and hiring staff to check out bikes.

 Download the Bike Program Image

## ABOUT USD

Founded in 1862 and the first university in the Dakotas, the University of South Dakota is the only public liberal arts university in the state, with 202 undergraduate and 84 graduate programs in the College of Arts & Sciences, School of Education, Knudson School of Law, Sanford School of Medicine, School of Health Sciences, Beacom School of Business and College of Fine Arts. With an enrollment of nearly 10,000 students and more than 400 faculty, USD has a 16:1 student/faculty ratio, and it ranks among the best in academics and affordability. USD’s 18 athletic programs compete at the NCAA Division I level.

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