For science to serve our community, our community must be fully engaged in science.
Inclusive Science Initiative

What is it?
The USD Inclusive Science Initiative (ISI) is supported by a $1 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute-Inclusive Excellence Initiative to increase the success of ethnic and nontraditional students in science majors. The goal of the five-year program is to remove obstacles for these students and provide mentoring and support as they move through their science education.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI-IE) is the largest private, nonprofit supporter of science education and research in the United States. In 2017, USD was one of only 24 universities nationwide to receive funding for this new Inclusive Excellence Initiative. For more information on the USD program visit usd.edu/inclusive-science.

Who qualifies for this program?
Who qualifies for this program? American Indians, the largest minority group in South Dakota, along with Hispanic Americans and African Americans. In addition, the program will also support students who are the first to their families to attend college and women.

Specific Programs Supported by the USD ISI

- **Peer Mentoring Program**  
  Students are paired with a student mentor who is in a similar science major. This peer mentor can provide advice on courses, support services, and in how to navigate the USD community.

- **First Year Experience (FYE) Courses**  
  These courses have been developed to provide students with an early experience in science disciplines as well as helping students to orient themselves to college life. Courses include “The Rivers of South Dakota”, “Let’s Talk About Stress”, and “The Science of Super Heroes”.

- **Support for Student Science Organizations**  
  An opportunity for students to decide how ISI resources should be used. Requests can be made for support to attend professional meetings, invite outside speakers, or hold a science symposium at USD.

- **Technology**  
  Support for lecture-capture technology that allows students to access course lectures from their computer or phone. The goal of this technology is to help students maintain contact with their courses while still meeting family or cultural obligations.

ISI resources are also dedicated to make USD better able to meet the needs of a diverse, multicultural student population. This includes:

- Courses on faculty mentoring
- Instruction of inclusive teaching practices
- Research to understand what factors lead to student success in the sciences and how the university could better serve them.