

NEWS RELEASE

Aug. 27, 2009

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University of Saint Mary to Expand Health Care Offerings with Doctor of Physical Therapy Program *DPT to Be USM's First Doctorate Program*

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—With the hiring of director Dr. Mark Horacek, the University of Saint Mary is working to establish its first ever doctorate with the doctor of physical therapy (DPT) program. The new DPT program is part of USM's ever-expanding health care offerings.

Dr. Horacek will spend the coming months building the program, developing its curriculum, working on the program's application for accreditation, and hiring faculty. Dr. Horacek, who created a similar program from scratch at Southwest Missouri State University, said he intends to have the USM DPT program up and running by fall of 2011. Eventually, the program should employ nine faculty members and admit as many as 40 students each year. Students would study for 10 semesters.

Once in place, USM's DPT program will be only the third such program in the Kansas City area. Horacek hopes to have attained full accreditation for the program just before the first class graduates in 2014.

Dr. Bryan Le Beau, the university's academic vice president, said the program is a sign that "as a university, we continue to grow. We're clearly moving more in the direction of developing our health sciences offerings. And in doing so, we are building on the long-standing tradition of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth in the health care field."

For his part, Dr. Horacek said: "I'm excited to be building the first doctorate program for the university. Hopefully, it's going to put the university in the position it wants to be in, and will open the door for other doctorate opportunities at USM."

Students can attend the program following completion of a baccalaureate degree. The ideal student, Horacek said, would possess "a strong desire to be a physical therapist and to help people who are not well. They also must demonstrate academic ability coupled with a value system that allows one to make good choices throughout life and especially with regard to people who are vulnerable."

All DPT programs operate from a core set of beliefs that influences their curriculum. Dr. Horacek said he envisions the USM DPT program focusing on honesty and respect with a strong emphasis on ethics. "The values should be congruent with the characteristics of the university as a whole," he said.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park, Shawnee, and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu on the web for more information.