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Cedarville Trustees Make Forward-Focused Decisions Amid Coronavirus Challenges

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- With a goal of continuing the university's mission and forward focus, Cedarville University's Board of Trustees approved curriculum for a physician assistant (PA) program that is planned to begin in May 2023, pending external approvals. The trustees also approved a new dean for the school of education and affirmed eight other new faculty members at its annual May meeting. The meeting was held through Zoom because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The trustees also approved the department of kinesiology and allied health becoming the school of allied health, effective in July. The new school will offer two graduate programs — the Master of Athletic Training and the planned physician assistant program.

Physician Assistant Curriculum Approved

The trustees approved curriculum for a 110-credit hour Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies. The 24-month, cohort-based program will require 60 credit hours of classroom instruction during the first year and 50 credit hours of clinical experiences during year two. The university hopes to enroll its first class in May 2023, pending accreditor approvals. The original 2022 start date was pushed back due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Students desiring to enter this program will be required to meet strict entrance requirements, including being a mission-fit with Cedarville University, having a minimum 3.0 grade point average and demonstrating academic competencies in both basic and behavioral sciences (anatomy, physiology, biology and chemistry and psychology). Students must also have 750 hours of paid, direct patient-care experience, successfully complete the CASPer exam and interview with the program faculty.

PAs are medical professionals who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications and often serve as a patient's principal health care provider. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative to meet the health care needs of patients, even during the current global pandemic. PAs practice in every state and in every medical setting and specialty, improving health care access and quality. The demand for PAs continues to expand, and the profession is one of the fastest growing in the country.

Once Cedarville's PA program begins, it will become the 13th in Ohio and third in the Miami Valley (University of Dayton and Kettering College). There are only four Christian universities currently offering the program. "The PA program fits well with our commitment to equip students for godly service and vocational distinction," said Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Loren Reno, acting president of Cedarville University. "The PA program will be an excellent addition to the strong health care array of programs that are currently offered at Cedarville University, and it will offer unique opportunities to share the Gospel through compassionate care of patients."

Kevin Jones to Lead School of Education

The trustees approved the hiring of Kevin Jones, Ph.D., assistant professor of education (tenure track), to serve as dean of the school of education. The fifth-largest academic unit at Cedarville, the school of education enrolls more than 250 undergraduates in its 12 licensure programs. Jones earned his doctoral degree in leadership education from Spalding University and Master of Education from the University of Kentucky. He also holds a Master of Arts degree in elementary education from the University of Kentucky and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Kentucky State University. Since 2018, he has served as the chair of the school of education and human development at Kentucky State University.

New Faculty Join Cedarville University

The board of trustees also approved the following individuals to join the university faculty this fall:

- **MacKenzie Davies, M.S.**, Instructor of Civil Engineering (non-tenure track) Davies earned a Master of Science in environmental and ecological engineering from Purdue University and a bachelor's degree in engineering from LeTourneau University. From 2017-19, Davies served as a graduate assistant at Purdue.
- **Terry Dickson, M.D.**, Professor of Biology (non-tenure track) Dickson earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Medical College of Ohio at Toledo and bachelor's degree from Ohio State University. Since 2009, he was clinical assistant professor at Michigan State University.
- **David Dittenber, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Civil Engineering (tenure track) Dittenber earned his doctoral and Master of Science degrees in civil engineering from West Virginia University. His bachelor's degree in engineering was from LeTourneau University, where for the past seven years he served as associate professor of civil engineering.
- **Luke Fredette, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering (tenure track) Fredette earned doctoral degree and Master of Science degrees in mechanical engineering from Ohio State University and his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Cedarville University. Since 2017, he has worked as a postdoctoral researcher for Ohio State University.
- **Ginger Gilhooly, B.A.**, Instructor of English (non-tenure track) Gilhooly earned her bachelor's degree in English from Texas A&M University, and is expected to earn her Master of Science in English from Bowling Green State University in December.
- **Misti Grimson, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Physician Assistant Studies; Medical Director, PA Program (part-time, non-tenure track) Grimson earned her Doctor of Medicine degree from Wright State University and Bachelor of Science in chemistry from Mount Vernon Nazarene University. She is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine, and since 2017, she has worked at the Carlisle Family Practice in Carlisle, Ohio. She was an adjunct professor in the physician assistant program at the University of Dayton from 2015-17.
- **Alicia McCartney, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of English (tenure track) McCartney earned her doctoral degree in English from Baylor University and a bachelor's degree in journalism from Patrick Henry College. She has held teaching roles at Patrick Henry College, Marymount University and Baylor University.
- **Christina Osborne, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Mathematics (tenure track) Osborne earned her doctoral degree in mathematics from the University of Virginia, a master's degree is

mathematics from the University of California–Riverside and bachelor’s degree from California Baptist University. She has served on the faculty at the University of Virginia, and since 2018, she’s been a faculty member at Ohio State University.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.