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Health Professions Announces New Leader

School of Health Professions will have its second-ever dean.

Story by Erik Potter

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For the first time, MU's School of Health Professions will have a change in leadership.

Dean Richard Oliver will step down June 30, to be replaced by Kristofer Hagglund, current associate dean in health professions and director of the master of public health program. Oliver, who led health professions since it became an independent school in 2001, will continue on as a faculty member and start a two-year term as president of The Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions in October 2013.

Hagglund praises Oliver's leadership and says he wants to continue in the same vein. His priorities include growing graduate and undergraduate enrollment, supporting faculty research through

increased resources — including endowed professorships and additional dry labs — and expanding the clinical services the school offers.

“Health professions is poised to step up to the next level,” Hagglund says, anticipating the burgeoning research programs and grant funding coming out of the school’s roster of young faculty. “It’s going to be a premier school in the next few years.”



Kris Hagglund photo courtesy of MU School of Health Professions.

Hagglund came to Mizzou for an internship in 1989 and stayed on as an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology and Rehabilitative Medicine, eventually becoming a full professor. He became associate dean of health professions in 2001.

In 2000, he did a yearlong health policy internship with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation where he worked with U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin’s office. The experience was transformative, opening Hagglund’s eyes to the larger world of politics, policy and public health.

After he came back to Mizzou, he teamed up with the late Jeff Tyler, MU professor of veterinary medicine, and several other colleagues to develop what ultimately became the Master of Public Health program, and worked with a team that included MU

Professor and Chair of the Department of Dermatology Karen Edison to start the Center for Health Policy.

Recent policy changes in the Affordable Care Act will have ripple effects on the health care industry, which affects the School of Health Professions as it tries to put its graduates in the best position to enter a changing job market. Likewise, trends in higher education, especially the advent of the free massive online open course, are changing the game.

“Health care and higher education are both in flux right now,” Hagglund says, who sees the uncertainty as an opportunity. “All of these instructional technologies are all tools, so how do we use them to obtain the best instruction possible?”

Topics: Medicine, Nursing, Health Professions and Veterinary Medicine, News, Web Exclusives

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