

NEWS RELEASE

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SVC ADDS MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAM IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION

LATROBE, PA – Saint Vincent College will begin offering a master's degree program in counselor education in the fall, according to an announcement by Dr. John Smetanka, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean.

The new master of science in counselor education program will certify students as professional counselors in Pennsylvania schools from pre-kindergarten to grade 6 and from grade 7 to 12.

"Students will receive instruction in both school policies as well as clinical counseling for children and young adults," Smetanka noted. "The 39-credit program is contemporary in design in that it will address current trends, theory and include extensive competency-based field work that will prepare candidates for the 21st century. Candidates graduating from this program will be prepared to take the Praxis II Professional School Counselor Examination."

The program has been submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for its approval to grant state certification.

Saint Vincent created the program in response to reports by the U.S. Department of Labor that school counselor positions are likely to grow at a rate of 19 percent from 2010 to 2020.

"The report references a steady increase in the number of students attending school as the reason for this continued increase in demand. The same report points to a greater than average increase in the need for community-based counselors. School counselors are equally qualified as general mental health counselors to work in community agencies and provide services to clients."

"Saint Vincent College has a long-standing reputation as a premier liberal arts institution," Smetanka concluded. "The multidisciplinary focus of this school counseling degree creates a program uniquely designed around this reputation. And the lack of any counselor education program in Westmoreland County provides an opportunity for Saint Vincent to establish itself as a primary program."

The new Saint Vincent program was developed by Dr. Veronica I. Ent, associate professor and chair of the education department at Saint Vincent, Dr. Mary Beth Spore, dean of the Saint Vincent School of Social Sciences, Communication and Education, Stephen Kuniak and members of the education department faculty.

Further information about the program and fall course offerings are available by contacting the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education, 724-805-2933 or

www.stvincent.edu/graduateprograms.

