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NEWS RELEASE

Oct. 16, 2002

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UM HISTORY PROFESSOR TO DIRECT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

MISSOULA —

Accomplished University of Montana history Professor Mehrdad Kia has been hired as the University's next director of the Office of International Programs and assistant vice president for research.

Kia was selected for the position from a field of six candidates interviewed for the job. He will begin his new duties Jan. 1, 2003. Kia will replace Mark Lusk, who accepted a position with the University of Georgia in September 2001, and Wes Snyder, who has directed international programs during the interim.

In his new position, Kia will work to expand UM's international activity at all levels, increasing international research and development activities and generating more exchange opportunities.

"Dr. Kia brings an energy and enthusiasm that will provide the University with increased faculty, student and staff exchanges," said T. Lloyd Chesnut, UM vice president for research and development. "I believe Mehrdad has the ability and willingness to work effectively with all constituencies to achieve overall internationalization of the University."

A UM history faculty member since 1989, Kia is an expert on the intellectual history of 19th and early 20th century Iran -- his native country -- as well as the Ottoman Empire and the Transcaucasus. He has published extensively on the emergence of a new Muslim intelligentsia,

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the relationship between the Islamic world and the West, political modernization and socioeconomic reform. His book "The Origins of Modern Political Thought in 19th Century Iran and Azerbaijan" is forthcoming.

Kia has won several top UM teaching awards, including the Distinguished Teacher of the Year award in 1997 and the Most Inspirational Teacher award in 1999. In 2000 he was named Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching -- an award offered through the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Kia has directed UM's Asian Studies Program and still directs the University's Central Asia and Caspian Basin Program. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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