Astronomer named to University of Montana faculty

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations

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The University of Montana, Missoula, has officially changed the name of the Department of Physics to the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Appointed to the faculty of the newly-named department is Dr. Thomas E. Margrave Jr., 30, assistant professor, who will teach elementary and advanced courses in astronomy and develop an observational astronomy program.

The University, according to acting Academic Vice-President Earl C. Lory, once offered courses in astronomy, but this is the first attempt to develop a comprehensive program in astronomy and the first time an astronomer has been appointed to the faculty.

Now the only teacher of the celestial science on the Missoula campus, Dr. Margrave plans a broad-based program which will range from elementary courses to upper-level courses in astrophysics and celestial mechanics.

"Astronomy," Dr. Margrave said, "is more closely related to physics than any other science. There is a common heritage in the two sciences."

This close alliance, he explained, is the reason that UM, following a trend which several other universities have begun, has encompassed the two in one department.

Dr. Margrave came to UM from Georgetown University, Washington D.C., where he was an assistant professor of astronomy and conducted research on stellar atmospheres.

Dr. Margrave, who received his bachelor's degree at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Ind., in 1961 and his master's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y., in 1963, was awarded his doctoral degree at the University of Arizona, Tuscon, in 1967. He joined the Montana faculty in Missoula Monday (June 23).

Dr. Margrave was graduated from Creighton Preparatory School, Omaha, Neb., in June 1956. He worked for the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center at Houston, Tex., for six months in 1963.

Dr. Margrave is married to the former Patricia Gaede of Tuscon. The couple has three children, Stephen, 3; Celinda, 2, and Cecilia, six weeks.