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DUKE DIVINITY DEAN L. GREGORY JONES TO BECOME SENIOR ADVISOR FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

L. Gregory Jones, who has served as dean of the Duke Divinity School since 1997, has been named senior advisor for international strategy effective March 1, and will step down as dean at the end of the current academic year, President Richard H. Brodhead and Provost Peter Lange announced Wednesday.

Richard Hays, the George Washington Ivey Professor of New Testament at the Divinity School, will serve as dean for a two-year term while a national search is conducted for Jones' successor.

"Greg Jones is an exemplary citizen of Duke University," Brodhead said. "It's great news that he has agreed to take on this vital position. As Duke expands its global presence, the need for imaginative leadership and prudent judgment is essential. I am certain that Greg's accomplishments in this arena will match the considerable legacy he has built at the Divinity School, and I look forward to working with him as Duke embarks on its next phase of international engagement."

Lange noted that Jones' leadership has been marked by a commitment to scholarship and service "that has put the Divinity School in the strongest position in its history. He is an intellectual entrepreneur whose vision for the school inspired faculty, students, alumni and friends, as well as his colleagues throughout the university. Now, he will have the opportunity to bring that same energy to Duke's strategic priority of globalization, and I am eager to work with him in this new role."

Jones will succeed R. Sanders Williams as senior advisor. Williams is leaving Duke this spring to become the president of the J. David Gladstone Institutes in San Francisco.

"Duke's international strategy is critically important for the future, and I am honored and excited to be moving into this new responsibility," Jones said. "Our vision will require significant energy focused on Duke's campus in Durham as well as developing capacities with partners around the world. I look forward to working with President Brodhead and Provost Lange, and to building on the excellent work Sandy Williams has done to ensure the success of Duke's global strategy."

"I am also very pleased that Richard Hays will assume the leadership of the Divinity School," Jones added. "He will create even more opportunities to strengthen the school's mission and outreach."

Jones' tenure as dean includes the start of the Doctor of Theology program as well as completion of the Westbrook Building and Goodson Chapel in 2005 -- the first expansion of the Divinity School since the early 1970s. He led the launch of Leadership Education at Duke Divinity and its accompanying online magazine, Faith & Leadership, and the creation of the Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life, the Duke Center for Reconciliation, a Hispanic House of Studies, and an initiative to improve clergy health in North Carolina. Jones also forged partnerships with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, southern Sudan, Uganda and the Great Lakes Region of east-central Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Germany, and in Central and South America.

Jones is the author or editor of 13 books and more than 100 articles, and has traveled widely to address issues of forgiveness and reconciliation. A graduate of the University of Denver, Jones received his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Duke. He is an ordained United Methodist Minister in the Western North Carolina Conference. He will continue to serve as professor of theology in the Divinity School and to work with Leadership Education at Duke Divinity.

Hays' appointment as dean will ensure that the Divinity School's momentum will continue, Lange said.

"I am grateful to Richard for agreeing to take on this responsibility at a time when his own research and teaching is flourishing," Lange added. "The Divinity School has charted a very ambitious plan for the next several years, and we are committed to supporting Richard and the faculty in their implementation of it as we prepare to seek a next generation of leadership."

Hays praised Jones for providing "remarkable leadership for the Divinity School, and it has been a pleasure to work closely with him. I look forward to sustaining the excellence of the programs we have in place and strengthening Duke's position as one of the leading institutions in the world for the study of theology and for preparation of women and men for Christian ministry."

Hays is an internationally recognized scholar of the letters of Paul and on New Testament ethics. His work has bridged the disciplines of biblical criticism and literary studies, exploring the innovative ways in which early Christian writers interpreted Israel's Scripture. His book "The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation" was selected by Christianity Today as one of the 100 most important religious books of the 20th century. His other influential books include "Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul" and "The Conversion of the Imagination." He has lectured widely in North America, Europe, Israel, Australia and New Zealand.

An ordained United Methodist minister, Hays has preached in settings ranging from rural Oklahoma churches to London's Westminster Abbey. He has chaired the Pauline Epistles Section of the Society of Biblical Literature as well as the Seminar on New Testament Ethics in the Society for New Testament Studies, and has served on the editorial boards of several leading scholarly journals. In 2009, he received an honorary doctorate (Dr. theol. honoris causa) from the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany.

Hays came to Duke in 1991 from the faculty of the Yale Divinity School, where he earlier received the M.Div. degree. He earned a Ph.D. at Emory University. He currently serves as chair of the Curriculum Committee at the Divinity School.