University To Accent Ascent In Space Science Department

By JOHN ROBERT BEHRMAN

University president K. S. Pitzer announced Friday the creation of a new graduate Department of Space Science to be headed by Dr. Alexander J. Dessler, who will be Professor of Space Science.

Dr. Dessler will arrive at Rice this March to begin preparations for inaugurating the new program in the fall term at which time a small number of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows will initiate efforts in both teaching and research.

GRADUATE students with degrees in Physics, Chemistry, Geology, and Engineering will begin studies in Geomagnetism, Dynamic Characteristics of the Interplanetary Medium, Van Allen Radiation, Aurora Phenomena, Atmospheric Structure and Dynamics, Planetary Structure, and Meteorics.

At least some, though probably not all, of the ten NASA fellowships recently given the University will be used to finance in part these graduate studies.

Research fellows will be conducting research and teaching in the above burgeoning fields. Until further arrangements can be made, the new department will be housed in the Keith-Wiess Geology Laboratories.

IN COMMENTING on the future of the newest and most unique department at Rice Dr. Pitzer said, "the subsequent growth of the department will depend in large measure on the interest and financial support forthcoming."

When asked to elaborate, the president indicated that such support would most likely come for the most part from NASA but that the military and private industry would very likely show some interest in developing the program.

Dr. Pitzer said that it was very probable that people in the Rice department would be using facilities at the Manned Spacecraft Center. Rice researchers will undoubtedly be designing and/or building experimental packages for future manned and unmanned explorations.

IN THE MATTER of laboratory and other facilities, Dr. Pitzer... (Continued on Page 6)
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The president indicated further that the new department will not cover all NASA activities at Rice. Such studies as other departments might undertake for NASA will not place them under the aegis of the new department.

Though the activities of the Space Science department will not be radically unlike those in progress in several other universities, Rice is the first institution to incorporate Space Science as a separate discipline. Rice will offer masters and Ph. D. degrees in Space Science.

IN ADDITION to the new fields it brings to scientific inquiry at Rice, Dr. Pitzer feels that the new department will open up" interesting possibilities for interdisciplinary studies."

Dr. Pitzer added that the new department might eventually offer an undergraduate introductory course in Space Science or Astronomy. Space Science students and teachers may teach undergraduate courses in their previous major field of study.

DR. A. J. DESSLER
Arriving In March