

Pair of Philadelphia universities agree to final merger deal

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Two Philadelphia universities—one specializing in health care and the other in design—have agreed to merge.

The boards' of Thomas Jefferson University and Philadelphia University approved a binding deal last week. Officials expect it will be finalized by the end of the current academic year.

Jefferson, which has a nearly 2-century-old medical school, currently has around 4,000 students. Philadelphia University, founded in 1884 as the Philadelphia Textile School, has the equivalent of more than 3,700 full-time students.

A marketing study is underway to determine what to name the combined university.

Officials say Philadelphia University president Stephen Spinelli Jr. will become chancellor of the combined university. The state Department of Education and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education both must approve the merger.

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