

Noted Screenwriter and Film to Be Featured

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NORMAN – Mark Jude Poirier will give a free, public presentation and screening of his feature *Smart People* at 3 p.m. Friday, Sept. 12, in 200 Dale Hall, 433 W. Lindsey St.. on the University of Oklahoma Norman campus. The screening is part of the Center for Cinema Comedy at OU.

Smart People stars Dennis Quaid, Sarah Jessica Parker and Oscar™-nominated actors Ellen Page and Thomas Hayden Church in a story about a widowed professor whose ambivalence to the world affects everyone around him. After the professor's imprudent brother comes to visit, he encounters further complications with his familial and romantic relationships, leading to numerous confrontations with his ideas about knowledge, life and love.

Poirier received a master's degree from the Iowa Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa, and he has earned two more master's degrees from Johns Hopkins and Stanford University. This is the first feature film written by Poirier to be produced, yet his writing accomplishments are extensive. In addition to screenplays, he has published five works of fiction, including *Modern Ranch Living: A Novel* and *Goats: A Novel*. He currently has three screenplays in preproduction and four screenplays in development at Paramount, DreamWorks and Universal studios.

“Having Mark Poirier visit us is quite an opportunity for our students and faculty,” said Timothy Shary, director of the Film and Video Studies program, a unit of the University of Oklahoma's College of Arts and Sciences. “He has considerable

teaching experience at schools such as Bennington, Stanford, LSU, Iowa and SMU, in addition to his impressive publication record. His appearance with this humorous and poignant film gives us a further chance to promote our establishment of the Center for Cinema Comedy at OU.”

The film was an official selection for the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and has played in wide release.

The event is sponsored by OU’s Film and Video Studies Program, College of Arts and Sciences and Department of English.

For more information and accommodation for the basis of disability, contact the Film and Video Studies office at (405) 325-3020 or fvs@ou.edu.