Cormack to serve as interim dean for AU's School of Engineering
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Dr. Alastair N. Cormack, the Van Derck Frechette Professor of Ceramic Science and director of the Graduate School at Alfred University, has been named interim dean of the School of Engineering, announced Dr. David Szczerbacki, provost and vice president for academic and statutory affairs at Alfred University. "I am pleased that Dr. Cormack, an internationally known and respected educator and researcher, has agreed to accept this appointment while we continue a national search for someone to fill the position on a permanent basis," said Szczerbacki. Cormack succeeds Dr. Ronald S. Gordon, who announced earlier this year that he would step down after five years as dean. Gordon will retire in December after a semester's sabbatical. "Dr. Cormack becomes interim dean at an exciting time for Alfred University," said Szczerbacki. "Effective July 1, the electrical and mechanical engineering programs within the College of Engineering and Professional Studies, and the biomedical materials science engineering, ceramic engineering, glass science engineering, and materials science engineering programs that reside in our New York College of Ceramics School of Ceramic Engineering and Materials Science, have been combined into the new School under Dr. Cormack's leadership."Cormack, who joined the AU faculty in 1985 and was promoted to the rank of professor in 1992, served as associate dean for graduate programs in the School of Ceramic Engineering and Materials Science from 1991-92, and then served a five-year term as dean, from 1992-97. He has served as director of graduate programs for the school since 1998.Because of his experience in research and academic administration, last fall, Cormack was appointed to the newly created post of director of the Graduate School, extending his responsibility to all graduate programs offered by the University.In that capacity, he chairs the AU Graduate Council and worked with deans and faculty on development of new graduate degree programs. In promoting research as an integral part of graduate education, Cormack worked with the provost's office in coordinating academic research.Alfred University offers master's degree programs in business administration, counseling, elementary education, literacy, secondary education, community services administration, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, school psychology, ceramic engineering, glass science, materials science and engineering, biomedical materials engineering science, ceramic art, electronic integrated arts, glass arts and sculpture, as well as Ph.D. degrees in ceramics and glass science, and a Psy.D. degree in school psychology.Considered to be among the leading researchers today in the field of computer modeling of materials, Cormack focuses on the atomic-scale physics and chemistry of materials, particularly ceramics and glass. He uses computers to model the way in which atoms are arranged in solids, and how that arrangement of atoms affects their properties. Through modeling, Cormack and other researchers are able to design materials hat have desired properties to meet a variety of applications. He is a frequent lecturer on the topic, invited to speak at conferences, colleges and universities around the world. Cormack is a Fellow of the American Ceramic Society, the Society of Glass Technology, the Royal Society of Chemistry, and the Mineralogical Society (United Kingdom).He received his B.A. degree from the University of Cambridge (Pembroke College), a Master of Science degree in solid state chemistry from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and a Ph.D. in chemistry from the same institution