

Cormack to deliver annual Scholes Lecture

3/11/20



Professor Alastair Cormack

Alastair Cormack, the Van Derck Frechette Professor of Ceramic Science and Founding Dean of the Inamori School of Engineering at Alfred University, will deliver the annual Scholes Lecture at Alfred University on Thursday, April 2, at 11:20 a.m. in Harder Hall's Holmes Auditorium.

Cormack's lecture, "Disorder in Ceramics and Glass – an Atom's Eye View," will examine the application of atomistic simulations to some of the problems, in both crystals and glasses, undertaken by Cormack's students over the years.

"Many of the useful – or otherwise – properties of ceramics and glass can be blamed on disorder at the atomic scale," Cormack observes in an abstract for the talk. "However, this can be hard to characterize experimentally, particularly in the case of glasses. Forty years ago the field of Computational (Ceramic) Materials Science did not exist.

"...Much has changed over the past four decades, both in terms of hardware and software. Really quite complex problems can now be tackled, particularly with respect to chemistry, where multi-component systems are now the norm and chemical reactivity, involving dissociative reactions, can be followed."

Cormack holds an MA degree from the University of Cambridge and MSc and PhD degrees from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Following post-doctoral work at University College London (including a stay at the University of Chicago), he joined the faculty of the New York State College of Ceramics in 1985. Since then, he has held a number of administrative positions in addition to his research and teaching.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, a Fellow of the American Ceramic Society, a Fellow of the Society of Glass Technology and a Fellow of the Mineralogical Society. He has Chartered Scientist and Chartered Chemist status in the UK.

He has published extensively, with an h-index of 45, and is considered to be one of the world's leading authorities on the application of atomistic computer simulations to the structure and properties of glasses. He is a member of the International Advisory Boards for the Physics of Non-Crystalline Solids (PNCS) conference series (first organized by Van Derck Fréchette) and the Structure of Non-Crystalline Materials (NCM) conference series. In 2007 he organized the 17th International Conference on Solid State Ionics, and the XIVth International Conference on the Physics of Non-Crystalline Solids in 2015.

The Scholes Lecture Series was established in 1982 by alumni of Alfred University to honor the late Samuel R. Scholes, who in 1932 established the first glass science program in the United States at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Scholes served as dean, associate dean, head of the Department of Glass Technology, and professor of glass science.