

LaCourse named acting associate provost for Statutory Affairs

3/15/06

Alfred University has named an internationally recognized scientist and educator acting associate provost for Statutory Affairs; the appointment of Dr. William C. LaCourse to the position was unanimously affirmed by the State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees at its meeting earlier this week. LaCourse will serve in the position while a national search for a full-time associate provost is conducted, said Alfred University President Charles M. Edmondson. LaCourse's appointment ends months of negotiations between SUNY and Alfred University, which operates the College of Ceramics under a contract with the State. Since Dr. David Pye's retirement as dean of the College of Ceramics in 2000, the Alfred University provost has been serving as the head of the College; a year ago, however, SUNY administration said it wanted someone in the post full-time, with no other responsibilities at the University. The state law creating the College of Ceramics specifies that Alfred University has the right to appoint the head of the College, and that SUNY can affirm or deny the appointment. Edmondson called LaCourse "eminently qualified" to serve as the acting associate provost while the University conducts a national search. "Bill LaCourse is well-respected as a scientist and as a teacher," said Edmondson. "I am pleased the SUNY Board approved Dr. LaCourse as the interim unit head of the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University," said SUNY Chancellor John R. Ryan. "Dr. LaCourse has been honored by both SUNY and Alfred University for his teaching and research. These skills, combined with the outstanding respect in which he is held by members of the Alfred and SUNY community, make him ideally suited for this important leadership position. I look forward to working with him and President Edmondson over the months ahead as we build upon the important Alfred-SUNY relationship." "I am grateful to President Edmondson and Chancellor Ryan for giving me this opportunity," said LaCourse. "I look forward to working with the Deans and faculty to satisfy our University and State missions." Under the agreement between AU and SUNY, the acting associate provost for Statutory Affairs is the interim unit head for the New York State College of Ceramics, serving as the administrative officer of the College and reporting directly to the provost of Alfred University and on a dotted line to the president of Alfred University and the chancellor of SUNY. Responsibilities will include: providing "general administrative support" for the academic affairs of the School of Art & Design and the School of Engineering, and "promoting the academic excellence in both schools." preparing the College budget for presentation to AU and SUNY. overseeing the expenditure of College funds. cooperating with SUNY and Alfred University "to promote mutual objectives." pursuing admissions, development and fundraising initiatives to support the College's strategic goals, in cooperation with the AU's Enrollment Management and University Relations divisions. supporting multi-disciplinary research activities and creative activities that are integrated with various initiatives at the graduate and undergraduate level across the University. LaCourse joined the AU faculty in 1970 and advanced through the faculty ranks to become a full professor of Glass Science in what is now the School of Engineering in 1986. He served as co-director of the Institute of Glass Science and Engineering from 1984 to 1988, and was instrumental in attracting the National Science Foundation Industry-University Center for Glass Research to Alfred University. He was assistant CGR director from February 1993 to February 1996, when he became interim director. LaCourse, who holds seven patents, primarily on biomedical applications of glass, also served as director of the biomedical materials engineering program, which now offers both B.S. and M.S. degrees. He has secured more than \$3 million in research funds, and his work has resulted in more than 100 publications and more than 300 presentations. He received a SUNY Award for Research and Innovation for his work. During his tenure at Alfred, he has advised 14 Ph.D. degree recipients and 44 who received Master of Science degrees. LaCourse has been recognized for teaching excellence, earning the McMahon Award for Excellence in Teaching, which is presented to College of Ceramics' faculty; multiple Alfred University Excellence in Teaching Awards; the Kruson Award for Outstanding Service to the University; and a SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. The Glass Art Society in 2004 bestowed upon him its prestigious Dominick Labino Award. LaCourse is also writing a book, Glass Science for Glass Artists. Four of his former students are or have been faculty members in Materials Science departments at colleges and universities. Popular with current students and alumni, "Doc" LaCourse was named an honorary alumnus of the University by the Alumni Association. For decades, he has been the "Voice of the Saxons," doing the play-by-play commentary at football games. An entrepreneur as well, he founded Santanoni Glass and co-founded Saxon Glass, both start-up companies located in the Ceramic Corridor Innovation Center in Alfred. Internationally recognized, he has been invited speaker at several conferences, including the International Congress on Glass. He was a visiting scientist at St. Gobain Research in Paris,

and a visiting professor at the University of Modena, Italy. He is a Fellow of the American Ceramic Society. LaCourse received his BS degree in Engineering Science from the State University of New York at Stony Brook; a master's in Materials Science from the same institution and a Ph.D. degree in Materials Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.