

SST's Dean Mundie to Step Down

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By Katie Choy - Originally Published 12/2018

GGC's Dean of the School of Science and Technology Dr. Tom Mundie announced his plans to step down to full-time faculty on May 30, 2019 and retire in the summer of 2020.

Dr. Mundie came to GGC in 2006 and is the college's first and only dean of the SST. His focus will shift from administrative duties to research and teaching when he steps down to full-time faculty.

Dr. Mundie decided to spend a year as full-time faculty in order to devote "more concentrated time" on his research. Called RPG+S, or "Retention, Progression, Graduation, and Success," his research focuses on the academic performance of STEM majors by gender, race and ethnicity.

"We started that study about two years ago, and I have increasingly been finding myself needing to spend more time with that," Dr. Mundie said. "As you can imagine, it's hard to do with all the other things I have to do as dean."

After taking sabbatical in Fall 2019 to focus on his research, Dr. Mundie will return to teach biology classes in spring 2020. Immunology and Anatomy and Physiology are classes he is likely to teach, he said.

Among Dr. Mundie's accomplishments is facilitating the growth of the SST from just 18 students, five faculty and one discipline in 2006, the year GGC was established, to nearly 19,000 students, more than 300 faculty and six disciplines in 2017.

More than that, however, Dr. Mundie is proud of the diverse and inclusive culture that he helped create at the SST.

"We have built a STEM culture that is very unique and very needed in our national discussion," Dr. Mundie said. "There's a lot of problems nationally about attracting underrepresented populations in STEM, females in STEM, and we have created a culture where students of all different race/ethnicities are comfortable being in STEM and stay in STEM."

Chair of Faculty and Associate Professor of Information Technology Dr. Sonal Dekhane, who came to GGC in 2007, echoed Dr. Mundie's sentiments.

"Our culture is still the same as it was when we were 35 faculty in SST. I think that's a big deal. That's a good thing that it hasn't changed a lot," Dr. Dekhane said. "We didn't have any policies or any processes that were created, that existed, when [Dr. Mundie and I] came here.

"I think Dr. Mundie has had a big hand in establishing what these practices would be, how things would get done, and he's created a culture where everyone gets a say in how things are done and what processes and what practices we develop. That has kind of become our culture, which is a great thing."

Associate Professor of Chemistry Dr. Mai Yin Tsoi, who also joined GGC in 2007, expressed her appreciation for Dr. Mundie's dynamic leadership model that "adjusted to the changing needs of the students and faculty of SST."

Dr. Mundie expressed his hopes for GGC to maintain its founding values of “small class sizes and engaging faculty.”

“I want to instill in people a desire to make sure GGC maintains its distinctive place in higher education and avoids the temptation to become like everybody else,” Dr. Mundie said. “I just hope that the people who are here and will continue to be at GGC will continue their commitment to that distinctiveness.”

Dr. Mundie holds a bachelor’s degree in Biochemistry from the University of Mississippi and a PhD in Biomedical Sciences from the Medical University of South Carolina. Mundie has published more than 50 research articles and previously served as Biology Program Chair at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, NY.

June 31, 2020 is the date set for Dr. Mundie’s retirement. He and his wife Ms. Virginia “Jenny” Mundie, an instructor at GGC’s School of Education, are looking forward to spending more time with their six grandchildren, volunteering and woodworking.

“It has been an honor and a gift to be able to have Dean Mundie as our captain of this ship,” Dr. Tsoi said. “His guidance, mentoring, vision and trust has directly impacted me as an employee, as an educator and as a member of SST. I have learned from his example and hope I impart to my students even half of the kindness and laughter that he has shared with me.”