

Michael Grabowski to Begin Term as COMM Dept. Chair

by Erin Murphy

In the Fall of 2007, the Manhattan College Communication Department was made up of 57 students and one faculty member - Dr. Thom Gencarelli. At that time, Gencarelli began his first term as chair of the department, with the goal of growing an entire major program.

What is usually only a four-year commitment for most chairs has become a much longer one for Gencarelli, who has served three full terms as department chair. Twelve years later, he has been successful in developing the communication major at Manhattan College to same standard as other programs at fellow colleges and universities, while also preparing students for their professional lives. However, come the Fall 2019 semester, Gencarelli has decided to step down and pass the torch to Michael Grabowski, Ph.D., associate professor of communication.

In order to be considered for the department chair position, faculty members must have senior faculty status at Manhattan College. As the department head, there are many duties and responsibilities to which the chair must attend. Although it is a temporary position, the chair must develop a plan by which the department will grow and improve, if not in size

then certainly in the quality of the education it provides.

Grabowski is also dedicated to this goal. He has said the motto for his term will be “quality and quantity.” With the most recent updates to the major, such as the addition of a new concentration in sports media production, with its accompanying mobile production unit, he says that he wants to keep up the momentum and ensure that the department “continues to grow and see what opportunities students are looking for in this quickly changing media environment.”

This new change does not come without its challenges. During the summer, Grabowski will officially begin his term as chair and learn all the administrative duties that come along with the position. For his first immediate act, Grabowski said he wants to make sure all the equipment and facilities of the department are up to date, specifically in Leo 108, the “Multimedia Lab,” which was damaged with the construction next door to the Leo Engineering Building. His priority is making sure that the department continues to provide excellent facilities to learn in, and the best possible instruction experience for students. •