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Peter's Burg: Peter Keane Steps Down as Dean of the GGU School of Law

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When the ball drops at midnight on Dec. 31, Peter Keane will complete his five-year term and step down as dean of the Golden Gate University School of Law. We're happy to report, however, that he'll remain on the faculty. After a sabbatical semester, he'll be teaching constitutional law, criminal procedure, evidence law and professional responsibility. Dean Keane leaves the School of Law in wonderful shape. He'll be missed in the dean's suite, but his legacy will pave the way for continued success for the law-school program.

In looking back on his five years as dean, the standout among his bevy of accomplishments was the renovation of the law-school teaching facility. When he took office in January 1999, the law-school classrooms — nearly all on a single floor of 536 Mission St. — remained virtually unchanged from their construction 20 years earlier. Even the largest classrooms were untiered, making sight lines difficult. Heating and air conditioning were unreliable. Lighting was inadequate. Acoustics were challenging. Students with laptops had to drag long extension cords to class and fight over the few outlets. And faculty who wanted to use computer-generated teaching aids such as PowerPoint slides or Internet access, or even overhead-projector transparencies, had to order portable equipment and hope it could be jury-rigged to work. Meanwhile, our beautiful auditoria on the second floor were underutilized because the seat-and-desk design didn't meet the exacting standards of the American Bar Association for law-school classrooms.

But under Dean Keane's and President Phil Friedman's leadership, in fall 2002 — just three and a half years later — we completed an \$18 million renovation of the second and third floors. The auditoria are gone, and large law classes are now held in three tiered 80-seat lecture halls that offer students comfortable seating at large desks with electric power and Internet access at every seat. The faculty have hands-on access to high-tech teaching aids, including projection of PowerPoint slides, Internet sites, word-

Peter's Burg



*Peter Keane
steps down as dean of
the GGU School of Law*

sible to hire new full-time faculty and to bring to campus many distinguished visiting professors. A new intellectual-property program was begun, along with an accompanying LLM degree in intellectual-property law. The graduate program in US legal studies has also grown substantially.

During these five years, three faculty retired, while seven more left for practice or other law schools. But 12 law professors have been added or moved to the tenure-track faculty, of whom eight are women and six are members of minority groups. The adjunct faculty has grown, too, with many new adjunct faculty coming from the judiciary.

Last, but hardly least, Dean Keane has dramatically increased public awareness of Golden Gate University School of Law through his frequent media appearances. Here in San Francisco, only a hermit would fail to recognize our departing dean from his many appearances on local and national TV. His voice is known to millions from his nearly daily radio commentaries. His frequent interviews with the news networks have helped build our national reputation as a home for legal education and scholarship.

Students, staff, faculty and alumni will all miss Peter's exuberant presence in the dean's office, but look forward to his many more years of teaching, writing and broadcasting as a GGU law professor.

— *David B. Oppenheimer, associate dean of
academic affairs, CGU School of Law*

At press time, the search for a new dean was in progress.

processed documents, VCR tapes, CDs/DVDs and document cameras. On the third floor, the dark, drafty, noisy echo chambers have been converted into state-of-the-art tiered classrooms and smaller seminar rooms, with power at every seat and the same high-tech teaching aids as the large lecture halls. The renovations have brought a new spirit of success to the Law School's students, staff and faculty.

As important as the renovations have been, the changes Dean Keane brought to GGU are more than skin (or plaster-board) deep. Pursuing the university's mission of practice-based graduate education, he expanded the size and status of the clinical programs. Under his leadership, full tenure was first offered to clinical faculty; three clinic directors have been promoted to tenure and made full professors. A new Innocence Project Clinic was added to the curriculum, directed by Susan Rutberg (JD 75), who is also director of the Criminal Litigation Clinic.

Enrollments have risen substantially during Peter's five-year deanship, making it pos-