Underwood funeral today after dean’s sudden death

"There’s not anybody in the district who would leave this kind of a gap," said his secretary Lois Bouas.

Funeral services for David L. Underwood, FVCC’s dean of instruction, were scheduled for 10 a.m. today at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 1115 S. Florissant Rd., Ferguson. Burial was to be at Jefferson Barracks.

Underwood, 69, apparently was recovering from a Feb. 26 heart attack when he died suddenly at 6 a.m. Sunday in Mercy Hospital, Chicago. (He was in that city with the North Central Evaluation Team on Feb. 26.) Although he had been on the Intensive Care Unit’s critical list for eight days, Underwood was out of the ICU, and due to leave Mercy March 28.

"I received a letter from him Friday and he thanked everyone so much for all their cards and letters," said Bouas. "I bet he got 300 cards."

"My gratitude to all of you is boundless," read Underwood’s March 12 letter.

"He also wrote he was very happy to be alive," continued Bouas.

Underwood came to FVCC as an English teacher in 1963. He taught English on Channel 9, and was the Communications Division chairman and in 1967 became dean of Instruction here.

The entire campus was saddened by his death.

"Dave and I have worked together for over 12 years," said Donald Gawronski, assistant dean of instruction, now acting dean of instruction. "When you work with somebody that long you don’t know what to say. Words are inadequate."

"He was a great man. A friend to the students," commented Al Lenoir, student body president. "He’ll be sorely missed by the students."

"He was a good friend to the faculty and will be greatly missed."

Charles Rock, president of the FVCC faculty association, reiterated Lenoir’s thoughts.

"The death of David Underwood is a personal loss of an admired colleague," began Raymond J. Stith, FVCC president. "It is also a serious leadership loss for the College. His competence and great wit, together with the essence of his leadership style long will be remembered and missed by those who knew and worked with him.

"He’s the guy who made me look good," added Stith with a smile.

"In all the years I’ve known him I’ve never heard him say a cross word about anyone," said Teddy Chorn, Stith’s administrative assistant.