

**September 18-19, 2013**

**ITEM 160-2002-R0913**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering for R.D. VanLuchene;  
Montana State University**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor R.D. VanLuchene from the faculty of Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to extend its appreciation for his years of dedicated and valued service to the University, the College of Engineering, and the State of Montana.

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**EXPLANATION**

Professor VanLuchene joined the Civil Engineering Department as an assistant professor in 1985. In the 28 years since, he has made substantial contributions to the department, college, university and structural engineering profession, leaving MSU as a full professor in the summer of 2013. Relative to the department, he has continually strived to keep the curriculum pertinent to the ever evolving practice of civil engineering, and more specifically, structural engineering. Upon his arrival at MSU, he instituted an innovative approach in the introductory structural engineering design course by combining what had traditionally been separate laboratory and lecture courses on related material into an integrated learning experience. While modified and updated over the years, this class continues to be both one of the most popular and most demanding courses in the curriculum. At the graduate level, he led efforts to develop one of the early Master's programs in the department focusing on a professional practice, with a program of study configured to allow students (with a lot of hard work) to complete both their Bachelor's and Master's degree in five years. Over the years this Master's degree program consistently has been one of the most heavily enrolled graduate programs in the department.

Equally significant as his curriculum innovations, Professor VanLuchene did an outstanding job delivering the curriculum in the classroom. Technically, Professor VanLuchene is one of the best structural engineers in the field; academically, he is an equally talented teacher. Considered collectively, Professor VanLuchene simply has been an excellent structural engineering teacher. The best supporting evidence also reflects on his impact on the structural engineering profession, particularly in Montana. The structural engineers in Montana meet at least twice a year, with 50 to 60 engineers typically attending these meetings. For several years Professor VanLuchene was one of the principal organizers of these meetings, which typically included professional development activities. Probably three-quarters of the structural engineers in attendance at any given event were educated at Montana State University, with Professor VanLuchene's classes comprising a significant part of their education. In attending these meetings over the past 20 plus years, these students (many now seasoned and eminent practitioners in their own right) have expressed their appreciation of what they learned from Professor VanLuchene and how well he prepared them for their professional careers.

Over his time at MSU, Professor VanLuchene served the campus community in a variety of capacities. Among many other activities, at the department level he served on the Curriculum and Promotion and Tenure Committees; at the College level, on the Computing Committee; and at the University level, on the Honorary Doctorate Committee. He routinely was involved with offering review sessions for the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam, hosting American Concrete Institute Technician Certification classes/exams, and assisting with various statewide high school science/engineering/math competitions

hosted at MSU.

Relative to technical specialty within structural engineering, Professor VanLuchene is a pioneer in the field of contemporary structural analysis and its implementation in various software tools. He was the primary developer of a structural analysis program now used by universities and consulting firms across the country and he continues to work in this arena. Over the years he has employed a host of MSU students and graduates as part of this work.

In summary, Professor VanLuchene is very deserving of Emeritus status in recognition of his substantial and sustained contributions to the University, its students, and the structural engineering profession in and beyond Montana's borders. His contributions to the Civil Engineering Department will be missed, but his positive impact will continue to be felt through the many lives he touched while at MSU.

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

None