

January 7, 2013

**ITEM 162-1005-R0114**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Pharmacology & Toxicology for Vernon R. Grund, University of Montana**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Vernon R. Grund from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his 21 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

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**EXPLANATION**

Professor Vernon Grund retired in December of 2013 after a 21-year campus career. He was founding Chair of the Department of Biomedical & Pharmaceutical Sciences (originally, Pharmaceutical Sciences), leading its faculty as an exceptional researcher, teacher and program builder. Following his 16 years of service as Chair, Dr. Grund became the Associate Dean for Planning & Development and Research & Education for the College of Health Professions & Biomedical Sciences.

First and foremost, Dr. Grund is a very talented, motivated and productive faculty member, making significant contributions as both a scholar and teacher. His CV lists numerous contributions to leading scientific journals, especially in the area of cardiovascular pharmacology and diabetes. Of particular note: Dr. Grund has served on NIH review sections, was recognized with the Mershon Award for outstanding research by the Montana Academy of Sciences, received a Distinguished Service Award from the American Diabetes Association (Ohio), and was an NIH predoctoral fellow.

Even with his significant administrative duties, Dr. Grund continued to contribute in the classroom. His commitment and talent in teaching has been recognized with both "Teacher of the Month" and "Teacher of the Year" awards by the pharmacy students' honor society Rho Chi and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP).

While Dr. Grund's strength and productivity as both a researcher and teacher are noteworthy on their own, it has been his ability to incorporate his background and expertise into his leadership at both the Department and College level that has had the greatest impact on our programs. In particular, Dr. Grund's 16-year service as the Chair of the Department of Biomedical & Pharmaceutical Sciences provided the leadership that was necessary to establish what has become one of the strongest and most widely recognized research units on campus. During his tenure as Chair, Dr. Grund played a central role in: the recruitment of more than 20 new faculty members, the addition of an equal number of faculty affiliates, the development and implementation of four new Ph.D. programs, the redesign of the undergraduate laboratory courses, and the increase in faculty research funding by more than thirty-fold. The scale of this last accomplishment is readily exemplified by the dramatic rise the School of Pharmacy made in the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's rankings of NIH-funded biomedical research at US Schools of Pharmacy. During his tenure as Chair, the School moved from unranked (only the top 50 of a total of 85 programs are assessed), to 7<sup>th</sup> nationally in 2009 with respect to total funding and 5<sup>th</sup> nationally in funding

normalized to the number of FTE PhD faculty members!

Dr. Grund's commitment to enhancing research can also be found in the effort he directed toward fostering the development of research centers, particularly those that include a collaborative clinical component with St. Patrick Hospital and Health Science Center. Thus, he played a significant role in the strategic operation of the International Heart Institute of Montana (Board of Directors), the Montana Neuroscience Institute (Boar of Directors, Strategic Planning Committee), the NIH *COBRE* Center for Structural and Functional Neuroscience (Administrative Steering Committee), and the NIH *COBRE* Center for Environmental Health Sciences. Dr. Grund also co-authored a grant to the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) within NIH that garnered \$3 million toward the construction of new research space for the two Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence. Furthermore, the alignment of the Department with these Centers provided increased opportunities for our students and faculty, as well as enhanced regional health care by increasing the opportunities for physician-based clinical research.

Equally significant, Dr. Grund's impact was not limited to just our Department and College. He was always identified as one of the leading advocates for research on our campus. His efforts included: actively contributing to the development and recruitment of a VP for Research, serving on the Governor's Task Force for Research and Development, becoming a member of the Board of Directors and President of the American Heart Association for Montana-Idaho, and serving as the Assistant to the VP for Research and Development in the Health Sciences. In each of these capacities Dr. Grund was exceptionally effective in furthering the academic mission of the University and enhancing its reputation within our community and State.

It is also very notable that the dramatic changes he helped bring about in BMED (and across campus) were not made at the expense of collegiality, as can happen in a growing department. In this context, Dr. Grund worked effectively with both new and established faculty. Indeed, much of his success was linked to his ability to identify and mentor individual faculty strengths and his commitment to quality in both instruction and research. By properly developing and blending faculty talents and interests, Dr. Grund enhanced the entire program. While the spirit of this dedication to excellence in our overall academic efforts is difficult to capture, it is probably best exemplified by the fact that Dr. Grund was recommended and received the University of Montana Academic Administrator Award in 2003.

Dr. Vernon Grund's talent, commitment and leadership enhanced the quality, productivity, and collegiality not only of his own department and college, but also that of the entire University. The faculty is pleased to nominate him for emeritus status.

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## ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments