

**September 17-18, 2014**

**ITEM 164-2003-R0914**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Physics upon Richard Smith**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Richard Smith from the faculty of Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University and the Montana University System.

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**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Richard Smith joined the Physics Department at MSU as an Associate Professor in 1980, then received tenure and was subsequently elevated to Full Professor in 1989. The faculty selected him as the Head of the Department of Physics in the summer of 2008. He retired September 30, 2013. Since his retirement, I have learned how important the historical memory of the department is to its smooth operation.

Dr. Smith has demonstrated a substantial and sustained contribution to the department and to MSU. His research career at MSU was where he became a world expert in the structural and electronic characterization of crystalline thin films and overlayers using ion beam techniques, publishing over 115 articles in diverse, refereed journals. During the years his work was well cited, he has 25 articles that have been cited 25 times or more (h-index). The facility he built-up and operated, the MSU Ion Beams Laboratory, was one of the very few university operated MeV ion sources in the US. It's uniqueness and his expertise is what brought visiting scientists from across the US and the world to work with him. In recognition of his contributions, he received the MSU Alumni – Chamber of Commerce Award for Excellence in 1983, the Charles and Nora L. Wiley Faculty Award for Meritorious Research in 1998 and the Provost's Award for Undergraduate Research/Creativity Mentoring in 2007. He was successful in obtaining extramural funding from federal funding sources including NSF, DOE, and NASA, and from the regional M.J. Murdoch Charitable Trust. In 2008 he was elected as a Fellow of the American Vacuum Society, a professional society that he had been involved with throughout his career. This honor is bestowed on only those members who have made sustained and outstanding technical contributions in areas of interest to the society.

As an educator, he successfully taught most of our undergraduate curriculum and was the main driver behind modernizing our senior laboratory class. He developed a set of modern physics laboratory experiments as well as a number of experiments that were associated with important Nobel Prizes. His patient style was a favorite amongst the students and he garnered strong student evaluations throughout his teaching career. He also taught a number of the upper level graduate courses that had equally strong student reviews.

He served the department as its Head over the last five years, and has served the university and the college in a variety of capacities and as a member of various committees (too numerous to list here). Of particular import to the department has been his advisory role for the MONTS program, the NASA EPSCoR program, and the MSU CRISS Facility (the forerunner of the Instrument and Chemical Analysis Laboratory – ICAL).

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer on Dr. Richard Smith the rank of Professor Emeritus of Physics at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.