

May 26-27, 2021

**ITEM 194-1006-R0521**

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus on Nancy Cook, University of Montana - Missoula**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Nancy Cook from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her 20 years of service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

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**EXPLANATION**

Professor Nancy Cook earned her PhD at SUNY-Buffalo in 1991, taught here at the University of Montana for four years between 1991 and 1995, joined the English Department at the University of Rhode Island in 1995, and then returned to the English Department at the University of Montana in 2005. She returned as Associate Professor and became Professor in 2015. When she retires this spring, in May 2021, she will have given twenty years of service to the University of Montana.

Professor Cook has been an engaged and demanding teacher all these years. She has taught a wide range of courses, including courses in film, but she has taught about all courses in her fields of expertise: literature of the American West and literature and the environment. She was one of the four members of the literature faculty who several years ago developed the Literature and Environment option in our undergraduate program and the Ecocriticism option in our graduate program. The latter is still going strong, and though the former has been suspended for the time being (owing to the loss of key faculty who taught in it), we hope to revive it at some point in the future. Professor Cook has inspired countless students to think in new ways about literature, ecology, the environmental crisis of our time, and the place of the humanities in engaging larger social issues. She has been an important guide and mentor to many graduate students.

Professor Cook's scholarship has addressed similar questions. She has published over two dozen essays in journals and books about the literature of the American West and the Mountain West. She has presented far more talks on topics in these fields than can easily be counted. She has been particularly active for years in the Western Literature Association, giving talks, organizing panels, and serving in important administrative positions. She is a distinguished presence in this field of literary study.

Indeed, among her many professional service activities over the years, the most impressive is perhaps her time as Vice-President and then President of the Western Literature Association (2009-2011). She also served on the Executive Council of the Western Literature Association on multiple occasions over the years. More recently she served as Vice-President of the Rocky Mountain American Studies Association (2012-2017). She has published many pieces and given many talks at local events around the state. Not least importantly, she has given time to department and university matters, serving on scholarship committees, admissions committees, and hiring committees. She has been very involved in the local Phi Beta Kappa Association.

The English Department is very happy to nominate Professor Nancy Cook for emeritus status.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

No Attachments