

November 21-22, 2024

ITEM 215-2018-R1124

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Regents Professor Emeritus of History upon Dr. Brett L. Walker; Montana State University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Regents Professor Brett Walker from Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION

Professor Walker received his Ph.D. in History from the University of Oregon in 1997 and was hired at MSU in the Department of History and Philosophy in 1999. He received tenure in 2004, was promoted to Professor in 2007, and appointed Regents Professor in 2008. He also served as Department Chair from 2007–2011 and was the Michael P. Malone Professor of History between 2013–2016.

Professor Walker is the author of six books, two edited volumes, and numerous book chapters and peer-reviewed articles in academic journals. One of his books, *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan*, published in 2010, received the George Perkins Marsh Prize for Best Book in Environmental History. Another book, *A Concise History of Japan*, published in 2015, was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for that year. As these accomplishments indicate, Professor Walker is widely acknowledged as an academic leader in his disciplines of expertise—history of Japan and environmental history; one of the (many) further indicators of the caliber of his scholarship was his 2013 appointment as a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

In addition to his academic achievements, Professor Walker was also an extremely accomplished, and very popular, classroom instructor. During his 25 years at MSU, Professor Walker taught more than 17 different courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels, several of which he created as brand-new courses for the department. Many of these courses also were designed for the Core curriculum, and thus also benefited the university at large, as, for example, his extremely popular and always fully enrolled HSTR 105IH “Making Our World in Ten Events.” In the graduate program in History, Professor Walker’s HIST 540 “History Methods” provided the intellectual and methodological foundation for generations of both masters and doctoral students, and helped to establish the graduate program in history as one of the most successful programs of its kind in the Intermountain West.

Finally, Professor’s Walker’s service to his department, the college and university, and to the public was immense. As noted above, he served as Department Chair, and as a chair or member of many different search committees both on the department and in the College, thus helping to form the current intellectual and academic makeup of both. Further, Professor Walker was instrumental in helping to craft the current Core 2.0 curriculum at the university, worked closely with International Programs, and participated in the “MSU For a Day” program, thus helping to expand MSU’s profile both within the state and nation as well as abroad.

In conclusion, while this summation of accomplishments could with ease be expanded, Professor Walker’s academic and pedagogical activities, together with his record of service, clearly indicate his suitability for being granted the title and position of Regents Professor Emeritus. He is an internationally renowned scholar, an excellent teacher, and has always been a strong advocate for both History and MSU.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Dr. Walker the rank of Regents Professor Emeritus of History at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years into the future.

ATTACHMENTS

None