

September 16-17, 2015

ITEM 168-2002-R0915

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering upon Alfred B. (Al) Cunningham

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Al Cunningham from the faculty of Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his 35 years of service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana by conferring upon him the rank of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Cunningham received his B.S. from the University of Nevada, M.S. from Montana State and PhD from the University of Nevada. He began his faculty career at MSU as an Assistant Professor in the Civil Engineering Department in 1977. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1982 and Professor in 1987.

Professor Cunningham has had a profound impact on the programs of the CE Department, the College of Engineering, and Montana State University. Notably, Dr. Cunningham was a founding member of the MSU Center for Biofilm Engineering, which since its inception 25 years ago continues to be one of MSU's leading research institutes. Dr. Cunningham had a critical and continuing role in the Center's activities, both strategically/administratively as a member of the CBE Executive Committee and technically as an internationally recognized researcher on the use of biofilms in porous media. Dr. Cunningham recognized the synergy between research and education, routinely bringing research activities into the classroom.

Further, his work typically crossed traditional disciplinary lines, with strong collaborations with faculty and students from multiple disciplines, including chemical engineering, microbiology and computer science. Dr. Cunningham's research activities extended across the diverse but interrelated subjects of subsurface contaminant bioremediation, groundwater contamination, water resources, hydraulics and fluid mechanics. Recently, his work focused on using biomineralized deposition of calcium carbonate to seal flow paths in porous media, with applications in carbon capture and storage, as well as in enhancing well-bore integrity. Dr. Cunningham and his collaborators were at the forefront of investigating/developing this important technology as we respond to the challenges of satisfying the world's ever increasing appetite for energy through natural resource extraction, coupled with the necessity of mitigating the impacts of its use.

Dr. Cunningham actively disseminated his research results to the regional, national and international professional communities, authoring/co-authoring over 160 journal articles, conference papers and technical reports. Across his research activities, Dr. Cunningham consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to involving students in significant roles. In the technically dynamic field of environmental engineering, Dr. Cunningham's classes were known for their focus on contemporary and emerging issues and practices, as well as their goal of further developing students' critical thinking and research skills.

In summary, for these and other contributions, the Board of Regents is pleased to confer the rank of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering on Dr. Cunningham in recognition of his 35 years of substantial and sustained contributions to the University, its students, and the engineering profession.

ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments