

May 25-26, 2017

ITEM 175-2702-R0517

Request authorization to confer the title of Professor Educational Theory and Practice upon Dr. Sharon Hobbs; Montana State University Billings

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Sharon Hobbs from the faculty of Montana State University Billings, the faculty of the College of Education extends its appreciation to Dr. Hobbs for her 21 years of dedication and meritorious service to the College, the University, and the Community. In recognition of her valued competence and in light of compelling evidence of said competence and selfless service, we recommend that the rank of Professor Emeritus of Educational Theory and Practice be conferred on her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Hobbs' educational background includes a Ph.D. in Education, Culture and Society awarded by the University of Utah as well as a M.Ed. in Educational Studies, also from the University of Utah. There, while in her doctoral program, Dr. Hobbs was recognized by the Spencer Foundation as a Dissertation Fellow. This prestigious recognition is best described by the Foundation itself in saying:

"The Dissertation Fellowship Program seeks to encourage a new generation of scholars from a wide range of disciplines and professional fields to undertake research relevant to the improvement of education. These \$25,000 fellowships support individuals whose dissertations show potential for bringing fresh and constructive perspectives to the history, theory, or practice of formal or informal education anywhere in the world. This highly competitive program aims to identify the most talented researchers conducting dissertation research related to education."

Dr. Hobbs' exemplary teaching builds upon this goal of "improvement of education." She has tirelessly worked toward this improvement through her teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses that are core to the professional preparation and development of educators in all areas of elementary, secondary and special education. In these courses, she not only builds the philosophical and ethical base that every educator must have to be successful, but also the knowledge of the ever-changing legal implications in their professional practice.

As a consequence of Dr. Hobbs' continual efforts to improve the education of not only her students but the eventual students of her students when they become teachers, she became one of the first faculty members at MSU Billings to teach in an online format. She converted multiple face-to-face courses to the online delivery medium. With the expertise she developed as an early adopter, she became not only an example of what was possible in online instruction, but she became a vital resource for colleagues in the College of Education and throughout the MSU Billings campus.

Dr. Hobbs has advised hundreds of undergraduates and graduate students. She has continually set a high standard in advising, seeing herself as a mentor who nurtures long-term relationships with her advisees. This has made her a much-sought-after faculty advisor.

Ernest Boyer, when writing in *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, could have been describing Dr. Hobbs' goals and accomplishments in saying:

*".... the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one's own investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one's knowledge effectively to students. Specifically, we conclude that the work of the professoriate might be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping functions. These are: the scholarship of **discovery**; the scholarship of **integration**; the scholarship of **application**; and the scholarship of **teaching**." (Boyer, 1990, p.16)*

She has published scholarly papers and presented at professional conferences locally, regionally and nationally. Her scholarship activities have indeed focused on discovery, integration and application, all with the goal of enhancing her teaching. Dr. Hobbs has continually provided for her colleagues an example Boyer's understanding of scholarship.

Of special note is the fact that Dr. Hobbs leaves an undeniable mark on MSU Billings with her dedicated and wide-ranging service. As an example, at the departmental level she has served as Graduate Program Leader, Department Rank and Tenure Committee Chair and numerous search committees.

At the College level, Dr. Hobbs' service contributions in the area of accreditation are especially meaningful. She has served an instrumental role in three college accreditation cycles. Dr. Hobbs chaired or participated on various accreditation-related committees. Beyond that she has assumed prime responsibility for preparing both self-study and report documents as well as exhibitions of substantiating evidence.

Dr. Hobbs has also served a key role in accreditation preparation at the University level as a member of the Steering Committee for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. She has served on the University Graduate Committee for an extended period, including as Vice-Chair and Chair. In addition, Dr. Hobbs has selflessly served on numerous other committees across the whole campus.

Beyond the campus Dr. Hobbs has made significant contributions to the profession as a reviewer for the following entities: The American Educational Research Association, The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, The Philosophy of Education Society, Teachers College Record, McGraw-Hill Publishing, Prentice-Hall Publishing, Merrill Publishing, and Houghton-Mifflin

CONCLUSION

For her career-long example of excellence in teaching, noteworthy scholarship and outstanding service to MSU Billings, the State of Montana and her profession, the faculty of the College of Education are honored to nominate Dr. Sharon Hobbs to the rank of Professor Emeritus of Educational Theory and Practice at Montana State University Billings.

ATTACHMENTS

None