

**ITEM 150-2001-R0311**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Associate Professor Emeritus of Nursing on Rita Cheek;  
Montana State University-Bozeman**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Rita Cheek from Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for her service to the University, the Montana University System and the people of the State of Montana.

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**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Cheek has had a long and noteworthy career as a MSU College of Nursing faculty member, faculty/student mentor, teacher, and student advocate. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (1970) from MSU and a Master in Nursing degree (1982) and Ph.D. (1996) from the University of Washington. She began her faculty appointment with MSU College of Nursing in 1982 as Adjunct Assistant Professor on the Butte Campus where she served as faculty and Campus Director until that campus closed in 1987 due to university budget reductions. She then taught at the Great Falls and Missoula Campuses until 1990 when she left to pursue doctoral studies at the University of Washington. She returned to MSU College of Nursing in 1998 and began an appointment as Assistant Professor. She served as Assistant Dean on the main campus in Bozeman during the 1998-99 year and then moved to the Missoula Campus in fall 1999. She was awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professor in 2005. Dr. Cheek has the distinction of having served on all campuses of the College of Nursing during her career at MSU (as a student at the Billings Campus; as a faculty member at the Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, and Missoula Campuses).

Throughout her 20 years with MSU, Dr. Cheek made significant contributions to the College of Nursing, particularly in the areas of teaching and service. In the last two years in her appointment as Butte Campus Director, for example, she was responsible for managing the campus, student, and faculty affairs during the period of time when that campus was being closed. Due in large part to her efforts, all students who began upper division in Butte successfully graduated before the closure.

Dr. Cheek was often a leader among the College of Nursing faculty regarding teaching issues and curriculum. She was instrumental in developing a draft of the current undergraduate curriculum that was approved by the faculty in 2001. She was actively involved in development of the teaching elective courses in the graduate program and also spearheaded numerous initiatives related to teaching such as plus or minus grading and advanced placement for LPN students. In her work to advance these initiatives, she was always articulate, enthusiastic, and considerate of pedagogical principles as well as the welfare of students. In 2005, Dr. Cheek was recipient of the MSU Alumni Association's Award for Excellence.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Dr. Rita Cheek the rank of Associate Professor Emeritus of Nursing at Montana State University, and wishes her well for many years in the future.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

No attachments