

September 16-17, 2015

**ITEM 168-1017-R0915**

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Chemistry on Garon C. Smith – University of Montana-Missoula**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Garon C. Smith from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his 24 years of dedicated and valued service by requesting that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of Higher Education.

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**EXPLANATION**

Garon Smith came to the University of Montana in 1991 from State University of New York (SUNY) College at Fredonia. He received his Ph.D. degree in 1983 from the Colorado School of Mines and taught at Colorado College before moving to Fredonia.

Professor Smith is an analytical/environmental chemist with broad research interests in air and water quality and characterization. He worked to find practical solutions to significant environmental problems and issues, especially at the local level. The results of his research are, however, of international interest and global significance. This is illustrated by the 30 manuscripts published in peer-reviewed journals and three book chapters. He served as academic and research advisor for 11 Ph.D. students and 9 Master's students at UM, and another six Master's students at SUNY Fredonia.

Professor Smith has been the Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI on more than five million dollars of research funding at UM. This activity led to cover articles on two widely circulating national periodicals: Science News (1997) and a four page spread in C&E News (1998).

Professor Smith was the instructor for Introduction to General Chemistry (CHMY 121) for 20 years. He had a major impact over that time, teaching more than 19,000 students from many different majors. About 25% of the students currently on UM's Mountain Campus have completed CHMY 121 with Professor Smith. He developed and realized a unique and effective approach to make the material fun, interesting and accessible to students with a broad variety of backgrounds.

Professor Smith has won several teaching awards: 2008 Montana Professor of the Year (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching); Most Inspirational UM Teacher in 2004; the 2014 Best UM Professor in the Missoulian's readership poll; and a 2004 Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology Award, Fifteenth International Conference on College Teaching and Learning.

Professor Smith has been heavily involved in service and outreach to the local, state, national and global communities for many years. Professor Smith was active on several quasi-legislative/quasi-judicial environmental boards, and he and his students often worked at the interface of science and policy. He routinely interacted with environmental directors from industry and regulatory officials at the local and state level. He was appointed by the county commissioners to the Missoula City-County Board of Health, Air Pollution Control Board, and Missoula Valley Water Quality District Board in July 1992 and became Vice-Chair of that group in 1994 and Chair in 2004. He has served as the Board's liaison to the Air Quality Advisory Council from the beginning. As Chair of the Board, he also sits on the Missoula City-County

Transportation Planning Policy Committee. He was appointed by various Montana governors to serve as the scientist on the Montana Board of Environmental Review from 1995-2004. He was a member of the Smurfit-Stone Container Community Advisory Panel from its inception in 1997 until 2010. These efforts have resulted in approximately 15 published reports with various local and national agencies, companies, environmental organizations, and the Missoulian newspaper.

On campus, Professor Smith organized and hosted two National Conferences on Undergraduate Research, has served as a significant member of the team who stage UM's annual Undergraduate Research Conference, as faculty advisor to ASUM since 2007, and as member of the DHC Presidential Scholarship Selection Committee from 2002-2013.

Professor Smith is well-known in the Missoula area and across the state for his outreach efforts to school children. He makes more than 50 outreach trips annually as "G. Wiz" all over the country and in New Zealand. During his time at UM, he has easily entertained more than 100,000 young students, many of whom later became UM students and graduates. His work on a two year NSF sub-award was recognized as having reached 12,000 students. As the Pittsburgh area chemists' 2011 Faraday Lecturer, he appeared in front of 7000 people over a three-show span. In 2014, G-Wiz became an international sensation as he captivated audiences in schools and communities large and small around New Zealand, where he performed for 10,200 students during a six month sabbatical.

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

No Attachments