

January 19, 2016

ITEM 170-2001-R0116

Authorization to Confer Title of Professor Emeritus of English upon Melody Zajdel

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Melody Zajdel from the faculty of 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.

EXPLANATION

Prof. Melody Zajdel received her BA in English in 1971 from Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, and her MA (1972) and PhD (1979) from Michigan State University. She joined the MSU Department of English in 1979 as an assistant professor and was promoted to associate professor in 1988. During her career at MSU, she taught a wide variety of courses ranging from College Writing I to Survey of American Literature, from Research Writing to World Literature. Her excellence in teaching was recognized with several awards, including the Mortar Board Professor of the Month, selection as an Influential Educator, and the Phi Kappa Phi Award for Distinguished Teaching, MSU's oldest award for distinguished teaching. Professor Zajdel was also an active scholar of literary analysis and criticism with seven book chapters, 15 articles and reference articles, three book reviews, and 40 conference presentations of her scholarship to her credit—her most recent research focusing on select Midwestern writers.

In addition to her work as scholar and teacher, Professor Zajdel also distinguished herself as a gifted and competent academic administrator. During her seven years as Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science, she advised countless students, handled difficult issues such as student and faculty grievances and misconduct cases, and organized and implemented the process for college and university. In addition to her duties in CLS, Prof. Zajdel was interim department head in the Department of Microbiology for the 2009-2010 academic year.

A tireless advocate for university women at MSU, Prof. Zajdel served on the board of the MSU Women's Center for 14 years. She was also a member of the minors committee for the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies minor for 12 years, serving as the chair or co-chair for that committee on several occasions. In 1998, she was awarded the Betty Coffey Faculty Award, which recognizes faculty or staff who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in incorporating women's perspectives into the curriculum or developing academic programs that contribute to the elimination of persistent barriers to women's success at MSU.

Prof. Zajdel helped develop several program and curriculum initiatives for the university, such as creation of the University Honors Program and development of a new core curriculum through MSU's Reinventing the CORE project. She was also involved in implementation of the Women's Educational Equity Act at MSU and served as a member of MSU's Faculty Council, Faculty Affairs Committee, University Promotion and Tenure Committee, Presidential Scholars Selection Committee and other faculty/student affairs committees. Beyond the university, Prof. Zajdel served on the Executive Board of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature and has held state, regional and national positions in organizations such as the Montana Association of Teachers of English and Language Arts and the Northwest and National Women's Studies Associations.

ATTACHMENTS

None