

May 18-19, 2022

ITEM 200-1019-R0522

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Environmental Studies on Daniel T. Spencer – University of Montana-Missoula

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Daniel T. Spencer from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his 20 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Spencer earned his Ph.D. at Union Theological Seminary in New York in Theology and Ethics, and began teaching at the University of Montana in 2002, after having received tenure at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. After four years of teaching in Environmental Studies, Liberal Studies, Philosophy and the Davidson Honors College, joined the Environmental Studies program as Assistant Professor in 2006. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 2008 and Full Professor in 2016. He served as Director of Environmental Studies from 2019 to 2021.

Professor Spencer was an effective and popular teacher and mentor who developed several new curricular areas in the Environmental Studies program at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He served on four PhD committees (one as Chair), over 150 Master's committees (46 as Chair), and directed several undergraduate honors projects. The strength of his teaching and mentoring has been recognized through several awards, including the 2011 Paul Lauren Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor Award for excellence in guiding undergraduate academic research, the 2011 Outstanding Faculty Advising Award for excellence in undergraduate academic advising, the 2016 UM Student Services Outstanding Service to Students award, the Best of UM: Best Professor for 2017 award, the 2017 Distinguished Service to International Education Award, and the 2020 Maureen & Mike Mansfield Center Outstanding Educational Mentor.

Professor Spencer was especially known for the international travel seminar courses he developed and led for 35 years to several countries in Latin America, southern Africa, and Vietnam. During that time, he has taken over 2000 travel seminar participants abroad, including sixteen international courses from the University of Montana. A strong advocate for experiential and field education courses, he taught several classes with the Wild Rockies Field Institute, and served on the WRFI Board for ten years between 2006-2022, including two years as board president.

Professor Spencer has been a productive scholar, publishing in the fields of the philosophy and ethics of ecological restoration, environmental and social justice issues connected to economic globalization, and the intersection of religion, ecology, and environmental ethics. In 2014 he coauthored a book on environmental ethics case studies, *Earth Ethics: A Case Method Approach* (Orbis Press), and has taught several courses using *Earth Ethics*, including with the US State Department's Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) where *Earth Ethics* was the primary text. His publications have appeared in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*; *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*; *the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*; *Restoration Ecology*; *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*; *The Ometeca Journal: Science and Humanities*; *The Journal of Political Theology*; *the Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*; and *The Journal of Men's Studies*.

ATTACHMENTS

None