

July 9, 2026

ITEM 225-1501-R0726

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus on Ronald J. White – Center for Advanced Materials Processing; Montana Technological University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Ronald J. White from the Center for Advanced Materials Processing, Montana Tech, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his contributions to research and graduate education by requesting that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of Higher Education.

EXPLANATION

As Director of the Center for Advanced Materials Processing (CAMP), Dr. White consistently provided high-impact leadership that was both exceptional and institutionally transformative. Under Dr. White's direction, CAMP emerged as a central pillar of Montana Tech's research enterprise, advancing capabilities in mineral processing, extractive metallurgy, and materials science while directly supporting the education and professional development of students at all levels.

The most compelling evidence of Dr. White's impact lies in his successful acquisition and administration of multiple large-scale cooperative agreements with the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (DEVCOM ARL), collectively representing tens of millions of dollars in external research funding. These programs required not only technical credibility, but also exceptional administrative discipline, strategic coordination, and sustained execution. Dr. White's leadership strengthened Montana Tech's research infrastructure, elevated its national visibility, and positioned the institution as a credible and competitive partner in federally sponsored materials research.

As the Campus Director for the Materials Science and Engineering Graduate Programs, I am well acquainted with the factors that enabled their growth and success. I can state unequivocally that Dr. White's administration of the DEVCOM ARL cooperative agreements was instrumental in the development, expansion, and long-term viability of both the Master of Science and Ph.D. programs. The research infrastructure, sustained funding, and interdisciplinary framework established under his leadership created an environment in which graduate students could engage in high-impact, externally sponsored research aligned with national priorities. The resulting gains in program scale, quality, and visibility are directly attributable to his leadership.

Dr. White's leadership of CAMP further exemplifies a disciplined and effective model of research integration. He ensured that externally sponsored research activities were directly coupled to student training, workforce development, and the advancement of institutional capabilities. CAMP's mission to deliver high-quality research, process development, and technical solutions while educating the next generation of materials scientists and engineers, has been executed with clarity, rigor, and measurable success under Dr. White's direction.

Dr. White's broader career reinforces the merit of this nomination. His prior service as Vice President for Research at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, along with senior scientific and programmatic roles supporting NASA and national research initiatives, reflects a career defined by leadership at the highest levels of university research enterprise management. Montana Tech directly benefited from this depth of experience.

In summary, Dr. White's record demonstrates sustained excellence and institutional impact. He has established a powerful legacy through his contributions to research and graduate education. Recognition as Professor Emeritus is not only appropriate, it is fully warranted. I recommend this appointment without reservation.

ATTACHMENTS

None