

September 24, 2026

ITEM 226-1005-R0926

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus in Missoula College on Dr. Thomas Gallagher: University of Montana-Missoula College

THAT

At the retirement of Dr. Thomas Gallagher, the faculty of the University of Montana, and Missoula College in particular, would like to express a profound appreciation of twenty-five years of conscientious, diligent, and impactful service to Missoula College, the University, and the State of Montana by recommending the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Thomas Gallagher has dedicated twenty-five years to serving Missoula College. Throughout his tenure, he demonstrated an exceptional and sustained record of achievement in teaching, academic leadership, scholarship, workforce development, and public service. Culminating with serving as the Dean of Missoula College for the last seven years, where he was pivotal in securing over \$10 million in external funding and strengthening workforce education across Montana.

Dr. Gallagher graduated from Carroll College in 1988 with a Bachelor of Arts in Math and a minor in Computer Science. He began his career as the Technology Director for Corvallis Public Schools in 1992 while also completing a Masters of Science in Computer Science through Western Washington University in 1996. Dr. Gallagher joined Missoula College in 2001 and has remained faculty since. In his tenure at Missoula College, he was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and again to Professor. He earned tenure in 2007. During his stint as faculty, he earned a Masters of Education in 2015 and then exceeded that by earning a Doctorate of Education in 2017. He has held multiple leadership roles in his time at Missoula College, from Program Director to Department Chair for the Applied Computing and Engineering Technology Department, to Union President, Associate Dean, and ultimately to Dean.

Dr. Gallagher has demonstrated outstanding leadership and service to the college over the last two-and-a-half decades. First, he provided consistent support and leadership for fellow faculty, even serving as Union President for the Missoula College Faculty Association for two terms. He supported the Technology programs for years, which led to the creation of multiple certificates and degree programs, the development of transfer pathways connecting associate and bachelor's degree opportunities, and taught a broad range of courses in computer science, information technology, cybersecurity, electronics, and health information technology. His efforts were rewarded with four Outstanding Service to Student awards and three University Faculty Merit awards.

Among Dr. Gallagher's most significant accomplishments was the establishment of the University of Montana Center for Cybersecurity Workforce and Rural Policy, the first and only cybersecurity center of its kind in Montana. Under his leadership, the University achieved designation as Montana's first National Security Agency Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense, positioning the institution as a regional leader in cybersecurity education and workforce development. He also founded CyberMontana, a statewide professional development initiative that has expanded cybersecurity education opportunities for technical and non-technical professionals throughout Montana. He also heavily advocated for Missoula College and secured significant amounts of external funding to support the mission of Missoula College.

Dr. Gallagher's has also served the State of Montana at large. He led the Montana Validated Skills and Training Task Force for the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, provided testimony before legislative committees and presentations to the Montana Board of Regents on issues related to workforce development, cybersecurity, dual enrollment, and community college education, and strengthened connections between education, industry, and public policy while advancing economic opportunity for Montanans. In addition, he has produced a substantial body of research and professional publications spanning cybersecurity, health informatics, ethics, workforce education, and higher education leadership. He has presented at regional, national, and international conferences and has fostered international partnerships through academic collaborations in New Zealand, Vietnam, Ecuador, and programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the Mansfield Center. His scholarship reflects a career-long commitment to applying research and innovation to address real-world challenges.

Dr. Thomas Gallagher has enhanced Missoula College and the lives of many faculty and staff. He has demonstrated decades of diligent service and leadership for the Missoula College mission. His career is an example to all faculty at the college. Thus, we at the Business and Technology Department at Missoula College enthusiastically recommend Dr. Thomas Gallagher for Emeritus status to recognize such dedication, service, and leadership and to hopefully continue to maintain his relationship with the University in perpetuity.

ATTACHMENTS

None