

ITEM 143-1004-R0509

Dean Emeritus of the School of Journalism and Professor Emeritus of Journalism: Jerry Elijah Brown; The University of Montana – Missoula

THAT:

The faculty of The University of Montana School of Journalism recommends that emeritus status be conferred upon retired professor and former dean Jerry Elijah Brown.

EXPLANATION:

Professor Brown retired from The University of Montana at the conclusion of the Fall 2008 semester. He served as dean from 1999-2007. During his tenure as dean, he taught at least one formal course per year and served as mentor to many students. After he stepped down from the dean's position, he taught a full load. Professor Brown came to Montana after nearly thirty years of teaching and administrative experience in Virginia, Tennessee and Alabama.

Jerry Brown was born in 1945 in rural Clarke County, Alabama, and is the youngest of fourteen children. He received his B.A. in Journalism, with minors in English and Agriculture, from Auburn University in 1963. He was awarded a master's degree in creative writing from Hollins College in 1968 and a Ph.D. in English from Vanderbilt in 1974. He was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities postdoctoral fellowship to Dartmouth College in 1975. Thereafter, he edited a weekly newspaper in Virginia for three years before joining the journalism faculty at Auburn. He remained there for nearly twenty years; he was named full professor in 1985 and became head of the Journalism Department in 1992.

At UM, Professor Brown taught courses across the curriculum, beginning with Introduction to Mass Media, a 200-plus auditorium class, to the print-department section of Senior Seminar, which prepares prospective graduates for entering professional practice. In addition, he taught courses in Opinion Writing, Copyreading and Editing, Reporting, and Media Law.

Although Jerry Brown's reputation at the University of Montana rests primarily on his successful efforts to raise funds for Don Anderson Hall, he was always a teacher, with the instructional mission foremost in his sense of values. The new home of the Journalism School is testament to his belief that a university begins with the relationship between student and teacher.

The completion of Anderson Hall, however significant, does not overshadow his contributions to instructional programs, his work with faculty, and his own performance in the classroom, seminar room, and lecture hall.

With Professor Denny McAuliffe, he created the concept for Reznet, an award-winning mentoring project and on-line publication for Native American students across the country. Jerry Brown was the primary fund-raiser for that project.

He also worked to promote faculty publications, and during his tenure two seminal books - Professor Clem Work's *Darkest Before Dawn* and Professor Dennis Swibold's *Copper Chorus* - were published. The documentary based on Professor Work's book, *Jailed for Their Words*, was produced with funds raised by Professor Brown; in addition, he participated in the planning, production, and promotion. These are only a few of the most prominent of the works, influenced by the nominee, that benefited students, faculty, the profession, and the general public in Montana and across the country.

While teaching, he received many awards and honors. In 1998, while at Auburn, he received the Faculty Achievement in the Humanities Award. He also was awarded many fellowships, including a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for College Teachers, a Vanderbilt University Teaching Fellowship, and a Hollins College Creative Writing Fellowship. In 2007, Professor Brown was honored as a distinguished journalist by the Auburn Journalism Advisory Council for his dedication to journalism at Auburn and beyond.

His students will remember him as a teacher whose instruction was marked by an interest in interdisciplinary studies, by his humor, and by his passionate commitment to First Amendment values.