

May 23-24, 2018

ITEM 179-1005-R0518

Request for authorization to confer the title of Professor Emeritus of Environmental Studies on Vicki Watson – University of Montana-Missoula

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Vicki Watson from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her 35 years of dedicated and valued service by requesting that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of Higher Education.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Watson earned her Ph.D. in aquatic ecosystem ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and joined the UM Environmental Studies program in 1983. She served as the director of the Regentially approved Environmental Science Laboratory which she later reorganized into the UM Watershed Health Clinic. Her research, teaching and service focus on the conservation, preservation and restoration of watersheds.

Dr. Watson typically taught a full load of classes each year including many required courses for the Environmental Studies graduate and undergraduate degrees. Over the years, she taught about 20 different courses, creating many of them, including a large general education science course that was also a service learning course, and an intermediate writing course. She directed 100 graduate projects and served on over 100 other graduate committees. Her research grants funded many of those students. She also advised a large number of undergraduate students, several ASUM student groups, directed hundreds of internships, senior honors theses, and independent study projects. She received UM's Distinguished Teaching Award (1992), UM Service Learning Fellowship (1998), and UM's Outstanding Service to Students Award (2015).

Over her 35 years at UM, Dr Watson was PI or co-PI on \$3 million in grants from the USEPA, US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, Montana DEQ, Montana DNRC, and others. She researched the impacts of cyanide and heavy metals from abandoned mines and the fate and effects of herbicides applied for roadside weed control. She helped MT DEQ develop a statewide water quality monitoring system and water quality criteria & standards adopted by the Montana Board of Environmental Review based on studies of over 200 streams and 50 lakes in Montana which appear in DEQ & EPA reports. She worked with the EPA to develop nutrient criteria guidance documents for the US and with MT DEQ to develop the first nutrient and algae criteria for Montana streams. Working with MT DEQ and the Clark Fork Coalition, she provides long term monitoring of the Clark Fork River which has produced peer-reviewed journal articles, peer reviewed government reports, and numerous professional presentations.

Every five years from 1985 to 2015, Dr. Watson organized six well attended Clark Fork River Symposia. She was appointed by the MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to serve on the legislatively created Clark Fork Basin Task Force which assisted in the rewriting of the Montana state water plan and Clark Fork/Kootenai basin water plan. Once these plans were adopted, she worked with others to transform the Task Force into the Clark Fork Kootenai Basin Council which continues to work for the implementation of the plans' recommendations. She has also served on the Missoula Water Quality Advisory Council.

Dr. Watson serves as a science advisor to numerous watershed groups within the Clark Fork basin, provides probono science consulting to numerous environmental groups, organizes Missoula area Earth Week activities, chaired the UM Recycling Committee for many years, chaired the first UM Sustainable Campus Committee, judges at the MT Science Fair, and student paper competitions and scholarship applications. For Environmental Studies, she maintains the department's only research & teaching lab, provides weekly student e-newsletter and a jobs listserv, and maintains key parts of the department web site.

For the Missoula area, she helps organize Earth Week activities, Public Land Day activities, and numerous service learning opportunities throughout the year for students, providing thousands of hours of community service (hazardous waste collection days, stream & prairie restoration efforts, wildlife studies and habitat restoration, field trips for school children and more). In addition, her Watershed Clinic provides field equipment and training and lab support to students & local groups conducting studies of local watersheds.

Dr. Watson's service related awards include: Clark Fork Coalition's Dedicated Conservationist Award (1988), Missoula YWCA's Professional Woman of the Year (1991), the Arnold Bolle Conservation Professional Award (1996) of the Missoula Conservation Roundtable, UM's Greening UM award (2006), MT Natural History Center's Environmental Educator of the Year (2007), Missoula Sustainable Business Council's Sustainability Advocate of the Year (2011).

ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments