

September 16-17, 2020

ITEM 190-2010-R0920

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title Professor Emeritus of History on Dr. Billy Smith,
Montana State University**

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Billy Smith from the faculty at Montana State University, the faculty wishes to express its deep appreciation for his years of valued service to the University and the state of Montana by requesting that the rank of Professor Emeritus of History be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Professor Smith is an internationally recognized scholar of early American history. During his career at MSU, he published nine books from major scholarly presses including, most recently, *Ship of Death: The Voyage that Changed the Atlantic World* (Yale University Press, 2013), which won the 2014 Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association's Norris and Carol Hundley Award for the most distinguished book written by a historian living in the West. Professor Smith has also published numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in leading journals and scholarly collections and has co-edited three special editions of major history journals. During his career at MSU, Professor Smith regularly presented his research at national and international professional meetings and in the local community. He intends to remain active in research and publication post-retirement, and he is currently working on a new book project *Runaway Slaves in the Atlantic World*. Professor Smith's achievements in scholarship have been recognized by MSU's Wiley Award for Outstanding Research (1991) and Cox Award for Creative Scholarship and Teaching (1994).

In terms of teaching, Professor Smith taught undergraduate and graduate American History classes for his department, invariably earning very positive overall evaluation scores from his students. He also introduced several new courses to the History curriculum at MSU, including the very popular undergraduate class "Race and Class in America." Professor Smith's teaching has been recognized by MSU's Cox Award mentioned above and the James and Mary Ross Provost's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (2000).

Regarding professional service, Professor Smith has served on important national committees of the Organization of American Historians. He has reviewed numerous manuscripts for the major academic journals in his field and has also organized and chaired major professional conferences. At Montana State University, Professor Smith has served on many important university and departmental committees.

For these and other contributions to the university, Montana State University requests that the Board of Regents confer upon Dr. Smith the rank of Professor Emeritus of History at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

None