

May 26-27, 2021

**ITEM 194-1009-R0521**

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus on Jill Belsky, University of Montana – Missoula**

---

**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Jill Belsky from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her 30 years of service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

---

**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Jill Belsky earned her Ph.D. at Cornell University in Rural/Development Sociology and joined the faculty at The University of Montana in 1991. Professor Belsky rose rapidly to the rank of Associate Professor and then Professor. She served as Chair of the Department of Sociology (2001-2002) and Chair of the Department of Society and Conservation (2015-2018), and as the Director of the Bolle Center for People and Forests (2004-2014).

Professor Belsky is a truly amazing teacher who taught courses on international conservation and development, political ecology, environment and development, and community forestry and conservation. She also taught field courses in Fiji, Belize, Bhutan, Malaysia, and Vietnam, providing transformational international experiences for University of Montana students. Her department has often commended her for her sustained excellence in teaching and noted how many UM students have been both challenged and inspired by her instruction. In recognition of her exceptional teaching in the classroom and in the field, Professor Belsky won The University of Montana Distinguished Teaching Award in 2007 and the Rural Sociology Society's Award for Excellence in Instruction in 1999. Professor Belsky was also an outstanding mentor to dozens of graduate students who are now working throughout Montana and all over the world to advance sustainable livelihoods and communities.

Professor Belsky's research focuses on the intersections of sustainable livelihoods, economies, governance, and ecological systems in South and Southeast Asia and the Intermountain West, with attention to cross-scale politics and policies. She has collaborated with the USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, the Blackfoot Challenge, and Swan Valley Connections on community-based strategies that contribute to local livelihoods and landscape-level conservation in Montana and Washington. She has also worked on community forestry, agroforestry systems, historic livelihoods and land uses, non-timber forest products, community-based rural ecotourism, and participatory community assessment in forest-adjacent communities in Indonesia, Belize, Bhutan, and the Philippines. Professor Belsky has authored 38 peer reviewed articles and book chapters, and 20 technical reports. She has provided 25 invited presentations including the Plenary for the Rural Sociological Society, the Keynote for New Challenges for Community Forestry, the Keynote for the Society for Human Ecology, and the Plenary for Remaking Wilderness Science. She has received funding from The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the USDA Forest Service Office of International Programs, USAID, The Nature Conservancy, and the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program. Her research has advanced scientific knowledge of social-ecological systems and contributed to community-based conservation and natural resource management, and she is recognized as a leader on community forests here in the U.S. and internationally.

Professor Belsky's service to the profession has been extensive and impactful. She served as Editor-in-Chief of one of the flagship journals in natural resource social science, *Society and Natural Resources* (2012-2014). She currently serves on the Editorial Board for *Mountain Research and Development* (2016 to present) and the *Proceedings of the Bhutan Ecological Society* (2016 to present). She has received two Fulbright Awards a Fulbright Senior Specialist Award (2015) and a Fulbright Collaborative Grant (1987-88). Professor Belsky has also served as Senior Advisor to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Global Economics and Social Science Programme. She also serves on the External Advisory Board for the National Science Foundation-funded FAMU ADVANCE IT project, working to improve equity for STEM faculty.

Professor Belsky's service to the University is also notable. In addition to serving as Chair of two departments (Sociology and Society and Conservation) and as Director of the Bolle Center for People and Forests, she also serve on the International Education Committee, the International Development Studies Steering Committee, the Natural Resource Conflict Resolution Program Advisory Committee, and as Chair of the Franke Sustainability Fellowship Committee.

The Department of Society and Conservation is honored to nominate Professor Belsky for emeritus status.

---

## **ATTACHMENTS**

No Attachments