

May 26-27, 2021

ITEM 194-2002-R0521

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of History upon Dr. Robert W. Rydell; Montana State University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Robert W. Rydell from the College of Letters & Science at Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION

Professor Rydell is retiring in August 2021, after 41 years of service at Montana State University and at the end of a long and spectacular career as an historian of early American history. Hired at MSU in 1980, Dr. Rydell is the Director of the American Studies Program, a former Department Chair, and a former Michael P. Malone Professor of History in the Department of History and Philosophy at MSU. He has authored or co-authored 8 books (and is currently working on a ninth), was the co-editor of 5 edited volumes, and written more than 35 book chapters and peer reviewed journal articles, as well as a vast number of other publications, reviews, and proceedings. As an indication of the scope and impact of Dr. Rydell's scholarship, his 2005 co-authored publication *Buffalo Bill in Bologna* (University of Chicago Press) was not only submitted for consideration for a Pulitzer Prize but also received the Ray Brown Award for Best Multi-Authored Book from the American Popular Culture Association in 2006. Dr. Rydell's other honors and awards include: the Mary C. Turpie Prize from the American Studies Association, the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Cox Award for Excellence in Teaching and Research, and the Wiley Award for Outstanding Research from MSU.

Professor Rydell's teaching record is no less impressive. In the 41 years of Dr. Rydell's career at MSU, he has instructed countless incoming students in American History through large introductory survey classes, serving majors and students across the university. He has introduced new courses to the curriculum, among them his extremely popular "American Thought and Culture" and has taught numerous Honors seminars. For the last ten years, Dr. Rydell has also taught the required graduate seminar in American history, thereby providing one of the foundational courses in the MA and PhD programs in History at MSU. Dr. Rydell is beloved by his students at all levels, who acknowledge the immense body of knowledge that he presents to them with good humor, creativity, and kindness. In recognition of his teaching, Dr. Rydell was a recipient of the James and Mary Ross Provost's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and the Anna K. Fridley Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Rydell's record of service is equally distinguished. He has served the university on countless search committees, advisory committees, committees for review and tenure, and more, and he has supported the Department, College, and University in myriad ways beyond mere committee membership. Not least, in his role as university historian, Dr. Rydell has preserved records of MSU's history and been instrumental in making that history and legacy known throughout the MSU community and to the public.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer on Dr. Robert W. Rydell the rank of Professor Emeritus of History at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

None