

March 15-16, 2023

ITEM 205-1009-R0323

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of History on Michael S. Mayer;
University of Montana-Missoula**

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Michael S. Mayer from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his 34 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Michael S. Mayer earned his Ph.D. at Princeton University and taught at St. Vincent College, the University of Alabama, the University of Illinois, and Auckland University in New Zealand before joining the History Department at the University of Montana in 1988. Professor Mayer rose rapidly to the rank of Associate Professor and then Professor. He served as History's Director of Graduate Studies for nearly 20 years.

Professor Mayer was a very successful teacher, serving thousands of students over the course of his career. His popular 100-level introductory survey of modern American history, which Mike offered regularly, usually filled some of UM's largest classrooms. His courses on post-World War II America, the 1950s, the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement, and the History of American Law were mainstay electives, and essential to the History department's curriculum as well as the pre-law program and the African American Studies program. Throughout his career, Mike was known as a rigorous pedagogue who consistently demanded excellence from his students. This was reflected in his teaching evaluations and alumni feedback that praised Mike's abilities as a teacher of academic writing and historical research as well as his overall contributions to their life and career trajectories. In addition, Mike has long been a cornerstone of History's graduate program, mentoring numerous MA and PhD students over the past thirty years.

Professor Mayer's research focuses on the post-World War II United States, with particular emphasis on political, legal, and intellectual history. Mike is a widely regarded expert on the Eisenhower presidency and the history of civil rights in modern America. He has given innumerable public talks at academic conferences, on campus, and across the state. His published work includes *The Eisenhower Years* (Facts on File, 2009), *The Eisenhower Presidency and the 1950s* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), and *Merril Proudfoot: Diary of a Sit-In* (Illinois, 1990) as well as a series of seminal articles exploring the Eisenhower administration and civil rights policy.

Professor Mayer played an essential service role on campus in addition to his contributions in the areas of teaching and scholarship. Beyond his extensive service to the History department, including his pivotal leadership of our graduate program, Mike has been an unrelenting contributor to the University of Montana. His participation in Faculty Senate and leadership on its Executive Committee (ECOS), for example, have provided crucial representation for the History department and the humanities writ large in those bodies throughout his career. From student appeals and academic standards to Graduate Council and the Constitution Day lecture, Mike has been a fixture—and often a leader—on committees that truly span the gamut of university life. His steadfast commitment and crucial contributions will be difficult to replace.

The Department is very pleased to nominate Professor Mayer for emeritus status.

ATTACHMENTS

None