

November 16-17, 2023

ITEM 209-1004-R1123

Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus Department of Psychology on Dr. Jennifer Waltz; University of Montana-Missoula

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Jennifer Waltz from the faculty of the University of Montana, the faculty of the Department of Psychology wishes to express its appreciation for her 29 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana. We do so, in part, by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Jennifer Waltz earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin in 1985 and her doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from the University of Washington in 1993. While an undergraduate and graduate student, Dr. Waltz engaged in collaborative research activities with some of the most influential contemporary psychologists in the US. Working from these formative experiences, she built a foundation of her own influential program of research and clinical scholarship, which she actualized in full over her career at the University of Montana. Dr. Waltz joined UM's Department of Psychology in 1993 and spent the entirety of her academic career here. On the basis of her outstanding contributions to the science of psychology, her thoughtful and attentive mentorship of doctoral students, and her excellent support of countless graduate students' development of clinical competence, Dr. Waltz earned promotion to Associate Professor in 1998 and Full Professor in 2010.

As a member of the Psychology faculty, Dr. Waltz was an impressive and inspirational scientist, clinical educator, and mentor. She set an example for her departmental colleagues as someone to whom we all looked for guidance and inspiration. Her early scholarship and contributions to science centered on intimate relationship dynamics, communication between relationship partners, and relationship-based aggression and violence. As her career progressed and in close collaboration with doctoral students, she focused on borderline personality disorder (BPD), BPD treatment with Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and related constructs of anxiety and PTSD symptomatology. In later years, she honed her focus on mindfulness, a core element of third wave cognitive therapies. Dr. Waltz's research contributions are unique for many reasons. One particularly meaningful distinction is that her findings are highly useful in clinical contexts. Stated simply, her work shapes clinicians' understanding of psychotherapy clients' lived experiences and helps them understand how psychotherapy might help them experience the world in more fulfilling ways.

As noted, Dr. Waltz's scholarly works have made significant and real impact to improve people's lives. Across her years of service to UM, Dr. Waltz published no fewer than 6 book chapters and 26 peer-reviewed publications in leading, high-impact journals. She delivered more than 50 presentations at scientific conferences. Many of Dr. Waltz's scholarly works were seminal in nature, providing comprehensive guidance regarding clinical phenomena, like BPD and its treatment. As evidence of her wide-reaching impact, several of her works were published in languages other than English, and a quick review using Web of Science highlights that her work boasts nearly 2,100 citations in refereed journals. This demonstrates the value her fellow scientists and scientist-practitioners find in her work. To have a research program that notches this degree of recognition in the international scientific community would

be impressive for anyone. The fact that Dr. Waltz achieved this recognition while working a substantial proportion of her academic career at .5 FTE is remarkable.

In addition to research, Dr. Waltz excelled as an educator. Her clinical expertise and insights were sought by graduate students, faculty colleagues from Psychology and other mental/behavioral health disciplines, and providers in the mental/behavioral health workforce across North America. Her contributions to the training of therapists—and evaluation of that training—are evidenced by her development of DBT training videos, through Phase I and Phase II NIMH Small Business Technology Transfer grants, and by the demand for her services as a national DBT trainer. Indeed, Dr. Waltz provided intensive workshop training in DBT to countless professionals in 13 different states and provinces.

Closer to home, Dr. Waltz's unfailing service and dedication to the Psychology Department and University far exceeded the typical expectations for a full-time faculty member. She served a lengthy and impactful term as the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) for the Department's Clinical Psychology doctoral program. While DCT, she initiated improvements in the administrative functioning and capacity of our department's training clinic, the Clinical Psychology Center (CPC). While DCT, she mentored a new Director of the CPC and led efforts to revise policies and procedures. Looking back on her role, Dr. Waltz's faculty colleagues are convinced that her administrative contributions catalyzed the graduate program's identification, as a "...hidden gem among the nation's Clinical Psychology programs" (Training and Education in Professional Psychology; Callahan, Ruggero & Parent, 2013).

Beyond the DCT role, Dr. Waltz served on several departmental and university-wide committees, such as the University Council on Sexual Assault and the Departmental Executive Committee. Moreover, a substantial proportion of her service, such as providing clinical supervision and formative mentorship to new faculty colleagues, happened 'behind the scenes'. Dr. Waltz served as a professional consultant to a number of local and regional social service agencies. As one example among many, she led Montana's efforts toward adoption of DBT programs by the Mental and Addictive Disorders Division. Finally, across her career, she served as a peer reviewer for many of the highest impact journals in psychological science.

In concert with intensive scholarship and service, Dr. Waltz demonstrated excellence as an educator. She was someone who all her faculty colleagues can only hope and strive to emulate. Toward the latter part of her career, her teaching responsibilities and contributions were nested mostly within our graduate program. Dr. Waltz's courses on advanced clinical interventions, ethics and professional issues, and applied methods (psychotherapy practicum) were routinely among the most sought and valued by our graduate students. Those who trained with her in clinic raved about her thoughtful supervisory style; they noted that she routinely pushed them to trust in their emerging competence and expand their confidence. The students who learned directly from Dr. Waltz were, without a doubt, among the most skilled, attentive, empathic, and well-rounded clinicians to graduate from our program. Quantitative feedback about her teaching provided additional data of her excellence, as student ratings always averaged at the absolute top of the evaluation scale. Qualitative data painted a more detailed picture, as many students credited her with helping shape their clinical identities. Dr. Waltz mentored many undergraduate students who went on to graduate programs and dozens of doctoral students. In touching tribute to her mentorship, several of her formerly 'out of state' doctoral students have chosen to make Montana their permanent home.

In closing, it is important to note how honored the Psychology Department is to nominate Professor Waltz for the distinction that accompanies an Emeritus appointment. During her appointments at the University of Montana she created an important and impressive body of scholarly works. She served the Department, the University, and the broader community tirelessly. In doing all of that, she was also a dear

friend and highly valued teammate. The Department of Psychology is delighted to report that we voted unanimously and enthusiastically to nominate Professor Waltz for Emeritus status.

Reference: Callahan, J. L., Ruggero, C. J., & Parent, M. C. (2013, October 14). Hidden Gems Among Clinical Psychology Training Programs. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*

ATTACHMENTS

None