
UNI Faculty Senate
Dr. Francis Degnin, Chair
Re: Request for Emeritus Status for Dr. Mary Donegan-Ritter

March 16, 2022

Dear Dr. Degnin and Faculty Senators,

I am writing in support of Dr. Mary Donegan-Ritter's request for emerita faculty status following her retirement in spring semester 2022.

Dr. Donegan-Ritter's legacy at UNI is through service. She has served as an associate professor in the Early Childhood Division in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction since 2013. Prior to this time, she served as an instructor in the department serving the undergraduate, post baccalaureate and graduate programs. Dr. Donegan-Ritter has taken a leadership role in the community through her collaborative work with Hawkeye Community College to create pathways for Cedar Falls and Waterloo high school students interested in careers in early childhood education. This initiative will create a seamless connection between dual credit courses, completion of an AA degree at Hawkeye and transfer to UNI for completion of their teacher preparation program.

This past year she and colleagues in the Department of Special Education created the innovative joint Unified Early Childhood Special Education collaborative engagement to prepare students for a range of potential career paths that prepare teachers to serve children from birth to Grade 3 in classrooms and their homes.

Dr. Donegan-Ritter served as the Coordinator of the Early Childhood Division since 2020, the Assistant Department Head from 2017-2019, and the Interim Department Head for the Department of Teaching from 2019-2020. Her leadership has shaped the department as she supported all divisions in thinking about future needs in the education sector.

Dr. Donegan-Ritter is a 'can-do' person. She always finds the time to support her colleagues and 'stand in the gap' as needed. She has an incredible capacity for work that is demonstrated through her leadership in so many places. This year she is serving as Chair of the College of Education Senate. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction will miss her calm, yet energetic pace, and her thoughtful consideration of ways to remove barriers.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction and I are very pleased to recommend Mary Donegan-Ritter for emerita status.

Sincerely,



Robin Dada
Department Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction