

James Mattingly

Chair, UNI Faculty Senate

January 28, 2020

Re: Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt

I am writing on behalf of one of the School of Music's most respected and valued colleagues, Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt, who will be retiring at the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

Dr. Burkhardt has been a tremendous colleague and made a real difference during her time here at UNI as a teacher, composer, advocate for inclusivity and role model.

I asked one of her colleagues, Dr. Melinda Boyd to write a tribute fitting of the amazing career Becky had here at UNI.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Funderburk

Director

January 29, 2020

James Mattingly, Chair  
UNI Faculty Senate

It is my honor and privilege to write in support of Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt's Emeritus Request. A complete accounting of her many accomplishments is impossible in this format, thus these few, brief paragraphs will have to suffice.

Dr. Burkhardt came to UNI in 1988 from the University of Texas at Austin, where she was a doctoral candidate in Music Theory. Her dissertation on John Adams's opera *Nixon in China* was one of the first analytical explorations of this work. At UNI, as Director of Orchestral Activities, Music Director of UNI Opera, and Professor of Music Theory and Conducting, she has been the consummate artist, musician, scholar, teacher, mentor and colleague. Over the course of her 32-year career, Dr. Burkhardt has directed 37 opera and musical theatre productions on campus, and has led the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra through hundreds of concerts on campus, in Iowa, and abroad. The performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in the Great Hall at the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center in April 2019 serves as an appropriate example of her ability to collaborate with the orchestra, faculty artists and combined choirs to achieve stellar performances of challenging repertoire. Dr. Burkhardt's contributions to the department in teaching advanced music theory are significant; although sometimes overshadowed by large-scale public performances, her classroom teaching has been essential to the success of the young musicians that she leads.

Somewhere between the podium and the classroom, Dr. Burkhardt finds time and energy for personal artistic expression as an accomplished composer. Here again, she collaborates with UNI colleagues across departments and other professionals in the field. In addition to commissioned solo and chamber works for School of Music colleagues and incidental music for Theatre UNI productions, with Cynthia Goatley, she has composed two full-length works for musical theatre, *The Scotch Verdict* (2007) and *Just Ann* (2017). Dr. Burkhardt composed *Fanfare for a First Lady* for Orchestra, performed for and presented to Michelle Obama, commemorating her address to the UNI class of 2011. In 2013, her original film score for the documentary *Waterloo: History of Place, Sons of Jacob Synagogue*, received the Award for Achievement in Original Music from the Iowa Motion Picture Association. Dr. Burkhardt received the Regents Faculty Excellence Award in 2003. In February 2020, she will be honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by her peers at the annual convention of the College Orchestra Directors Association, an organization that she has served as National President.

For women in the arts, conducting, composition, and music theory are all considered difficult career paths, yet Dr. Burkhardt has managed to forge a successful career doing all three. She is gracious with her time in mentoring colleagues and students, and humble in accepting praise for the exemplary work she has accomplished. I am so proud to be able to call Rebecca Burkhardt my colleague and my friend; she has been a singular force and guiding light in my own professional life at UNI. I heartily endorse her request for Emeritus status, and wish her well on the next phase of her artistic journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melinda Boyd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Melinda Boyd, Ph.D.  
Associate Director for Undergraduate Studies  
Associate Professor of Music History  
UNI School of Music