

November 1, 2021

Dear University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate,

I am deeply humbled and honored to serve as the designated representative from the College of Education (Department of Health, Recreation, and Community Services) to nominate my longtime colleague and friend, Dr. Catherine Zeman, for Professor Emerita status.

Dr. Zeman is widely recognized at UNI and nationally in her field as an award-winning, exceptional servant scholar and brilliant researcher. She received her Ph.D. in Preventive Medicine at the University of Iowa in 2000 with a specialty in Environmental and Occupational Health, after completing undergraduate and graduate work in Environmental Science, Physical Anthropology, Human Ecology, and Biology through Southern Illinois University. In addition to her academic training, Dr. Zeman also has clinical expertise as a Registered Nurse and Certified Holistic Health Practitioner through the American College of Health Sciences. Dr. Zeman started her career at UNI in 2000 as an Assistant Professor, was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2004, and then became Full Professor in 2012 in the School of Health, Physical Education, and Leisure Services in the College of Education. Dr. Zeman also carried a split appointment with the College of Natural Sciences as Center Director of the Recycling and Reuse Technology Transfer Center for 15% of her time at UNI.

Dr. Zeman has been honored frequently for her outstanding teaching with recognition at the university and state level, including the Iowa Regents Award. Always extremely popular and in demand with her students in environmental science, public health, and related biology fields, Dr. Zeman's courses are well remembered for their student engagement and applied experiences. She had the ability to present complex ideas in a simplified and direct fashion that are understandable, exciting, and meaningful for students. She used numerous examples from throughout the world and provided detailed explanations of complex concepts. Interestingly, Dr. Zeman was able to translate many of these skills even to her online classes, which were equally thorough, detailed, and very engaging. Dr. Zeman was a strategic thinker in her coursework and trained several decades of young professionals on climate change topics, environmental security, complementary and alternative medicine, and other pressing issues that were often ahead of their time. To her credit, Dr. Zeman remains actively in touch with many of her former students as their lifelong mentor in their professional careers. Typically, approximately 94-100% of her student evaluations rated her teaching as effective or highly effective over the past several decades at UNI. On a personal note, as a scholar of Native American heritage, Dr.

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Zeman was particularly active in training and mentoring students of color in the sciences in her courses and research.

Dr. Catherine Zeman has a continuous and sustained record of rigorous scholarship focused on environmental and occupational health. Several of her main areas of research have included non-cancer disorders related to blood; environmental justice; sustainability; and the nexus between climate change and human health. Dr. Zeman has distilled an effective scholarly focus in each of these areas leading to a number of important peer reviewed publications and presentations. Her work not only reflects a local focus but also a national and international one. In particular, her work in rural populations of Romanian and Roma individuals from Transylvania, Romania is noteworthy, with publications and lead pieces in *The Journal of Exposure Analysis and Environmental Epidemiology*, *Journal of Environmental Health* and *Environmental Health Perspectives*, as well as conference proceedings. As a Fulbright Scholar, her work in Romania enabled her to build a relationship with the Luliu Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Cluj Napoca that resulted in the publishing of several technical reports and papers. Her work focused on health disparities has been reflected in publications such as *The International Electronic Journal of Health Education*, and *Ethnicity and Health*. These publications reflect a keen interest by Dr. Zeman in how poverty, race, and ethnicity influence health behaviors and the quality of one's health.

Dr. Zeman was extremely productive from a scholarship standpoint while at UNI. Altogether, Dr. Zeman published approximately 100 scientific articles in peer reviewed, scientific, or other professional publication venues. She has been the lead author of the vast majority of these publications. Dr. Zeman is well respected at UNI and in her field for mastery and passion for conducting complex quantitative scientific research projects. Her studies are thorough, accurate, detailed, and relevant to multiple audiences. She has disseminated her findings beyond written journals by being an active speaker and conference presenter at more than 100 different events since she came to UNI, with at least a quarter of these presentations being at highly prestigious international conferences. Much of her work reflected her tireless advocacy for environmental justice in diverse and underserved communities.

From a service standpoint, Dr. Catherine Zeman's professional contributions have been truly outstanding and extensive. She served for many years as the Director of the Recycling and Reuse Technology Transfer Center (RRTTC) on campus, which provides valuable technical assistance, research, training, and outreach to tens of thousands of Iowans each year. In addition, she served on multiple professional boards and a number of committees including the Editorial Advisory Board for the Open Environmental Journal; Environment and Public Health Committee of the Multi-State Working Group; Editorial Committee, International Journal of Global Health; and Editorial Committee, Foxwell & Davies Italia srl, Env. Science Division;

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Review Fellowship Program, Environmental Life Sciences Panel; Environment and Public Health Committee of the Multi-State Working Group; Iowa Governor's Green Advisory Board; Board Member, Pesticide and Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Committee of the Iowa Department of Public Health; Board Member, Iowa Environmental Health Association; President, Iowa Recycling Association; Panel Member, EPA Region 7 Mercury Task Force; Liaison, University of Northern Iowa/University of Iowa, Joint MPH Program; Iowa Energy Center, Board of Directors; Member, Advanced Technology Environmental Education Center Curriculum Council; and Board of Directors, American Institute of Sustainable Science and Technology. Most recently, Dr. Zeman was very active in helping guide Iowa and the University of Northern Iowa through the COVID pandemic as an active member of the Black Hawk County Board of Health and the UNI Incident Command Team for COVID.

Dr. Zeman's professional service at the University of Northern Iowa has also been remarkable. She served brilliantly for several years as Chair of the Division of Health Promotion and Education. She was also a member of the College of Natural Sciences' Diversity Committee; Member, COE Diversity Committee; Member, COE Intensive Study Area Committee, ISA; Member, President's Committee on Sustainability and engagement sub-committee; UNI Labor Management Committee on Health Care Cost Containment; Faculty Judge for Graduate Research Poster Competition, Graduate Student Research Symposium; Member, University Health and Safety Committee; Graduate Advisor, Health Division, School of HPELS; Faculty Associate, Iowa Center on Health Disparities; Advisory Board Member, UNI Yards for Kids Project; Current and Past Member, HPELS Curriculum Committee; Advisor, University of Northern Iowa, Native American Student Union; Advisory Board Chair, UNI Leadership Studies Program; At large representative, Administrative Council, United Faculty; Member, Campus Conversations: whitepaper group on communication; Member, Associate Vice President for Sponsored Programs Search Committee; Member, Award Selection Committee, UNI Graduate College, Outstanding Graduate Teaching; Member, HPELS Graduate Committee; Member, HPELS Technology Committee; Chair, University of Northern Iowa Intellectual Properties Committee; Chair, University of Northern Iowa Provost Committee on Digital Copyright Policy; Member, University of Northern Iowa Technology Transfer Committee; and Advisor, UNI, Student Environmental Action Coalition.

Remarkably, Dr. Zeman served as the Chair of 23 masters and 8 doctoral committees and led these young scholars through demanding scientific research in her lab on campus. Dr. Zeman was also an active recipient of competitive grants and contracts totaling nearly \$6,000,000 at UNI. She has received numerous honors and awards including: The Iowa Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence; Recycler of the Year, Iowa Recycling Association; the Regents Award; UNI College of Education, University Book and Supply, Outstanding Teaching Award; and the UNI Graduate College Outstanding Graduate Faculty Teaching Award.

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In sum, Dr. Catherine Zeman reflects great evidence of excellence in all of the aforementioned categories. She was an outstanding faculty member who was beloved by her students and deeply respected by her peers while employed at UNI. To put it bluntly, we miss her greatly and are saddened to not have her actively working with us any longer. As Professor Emerita, Dr. Zeman will no doubt demonstrate a wealth and depth of service to her profession and the University of Northern Iowa far beyond that which is expected by retired faculty. She is the epitome of an interdisciplinary Community Engagement scholar who has masterfully integrated teaching, service, and scholarship with the academic community, the professional world, and the lay public. Thank you for your consideration of this exceptional candidate's application for Professor Emerita status.

Very respectfully,

Dr. Michele Devlin, RN, EMT  
Professor of Arctic and Global Health  
Department of Health, Recreation and Community Services  
College of Education  
University of Northern Iowa