

Dear Chair Petersen and Faculty Senators,

I am writing in support of the emeritus application of Dr. Mitchell D. Strauss. I have worked with Dr. Strauss since his arrival at the University of Northern Iowa twenty years ago, served as his direct supervisor for the past 3 years, and can attest to the quality of his credentials for emeritus status.

Dr. Strauss has worked in higher education in the field of Textiles and Apparel for over 35 years, 20 of which were at the University of Northern Iowa. In addition to serving as a professor teaching both graduate and undergraduate classes in textiles and apparel, he also served in administrative capacity as dean of the graduate school at the Institute of Textile Technology and department head of Apparel, Textiles and Interior Design at Kansas State University. Dr. Strauss also coordinated the UNI textile and apparel program for the 20 years he's been at UNI.

Dr. Strauss' prior leadership positions in the textile industry, including Technical and Quality Manager of the Tallasee Division of Mount Vernon Mills, in Tallasee, AL, as well as Director of Corporate Textile Research for Air Products and Chemicals in Allentown, PA brought valuable knowledge and insights to the curriculum. The University of Northern Iowa's Textile and Apparel program has often been noted by outside reviewers as one of the strongest fashion degrees from a technical standpoint in the field, and Dr. Strauss' expertise has contributed extensively to that reputation. To that end in 2004, Dr. Strauss was awarded the University Book and Supply Outstanding Teaching Award. Additionally, Dr. Strauss has consulted with numerous textile companies and has given presentations about managing manufacturing technology in places such as Paris, Germany, Brazil and the U.S. These connections have helped open doors for student internships and employment for the program's graduates.

While at UNI, Dr. Strauss has maintained an active scholarship agenda. He co-authored a book on fashion change theory, co-edited an encyclopedia of ethnic fashion, and published several papers and encyclopedia articles on the meaning of dress in civil war reenacting, which are often cited by other researchers in the field. He also served as the primary investigator on the National Science Foundation grant that funded the building of an extensive state-of-the-art textile testing laboratory that has been used to give hands-on experience to all textile and apparel majors, many who have gone on to take leadership positions in the industry and use that knowledge frequently.

Over his career, Dr. Strauss has been active in service to his institutions in a variety of ways. Most recently at UNI, Dr. Strauss is currently in his second term as a member of the University Faculty Senate, and he has previously served as Chair of the CSBS Senate. One of the accomplishments Dr. Strauss is most fond of is the design and founding of the Honor System at Kansas State University.

In conclusion, Dr. Strauss' meritorious service to UNI and to higher education is deserving of emeritus status. His expertise has been invaluable to the development of UNI's Textiles and Apparel program, he has built excellent opportunities for students, his research publications have been well received in his discipline, and he has served the institution in a variety of meaningful ways.

Sincerely,



Brenda L. Bass, Ph. D.  
Dean, CSBS