

**BOARD OF REGENTS**  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION: 7  
DATE:  
October 19, 2023

**RECOMMENDATION**

**HONORARY EMERITUS FACULTY STATUS**

**ACTION REQUESTED**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents grant Honorary Emeritus Status for Meritorious Service to Professor Karen Smith-Meyer, who was a pillar of the Communication, Media & Theatre Arts department until her passing in 2001.

During her 14 years at the University, Professor Smith-Meyer served as a lecturer, faculty member, and head of the Theatre and Educational Drama area immediately after its inception. She directed several theatre productions both at EMU and beyond. She also served as a proud representative of our institution as a co-editor for the national publication, *Stage of the Art*. She was beloved as both an instructor and a colleague, and her commitment to Eastern was evident throughout her time here.

Professor Karen Meyer-Smith was a dedicated member of the faculty in Communication, Media & Theatre Arts and a leader during a crucial time of change within the department.

**STAFF SUMMARY**

According to University policy, retiring employees who have served the University for fewer than 15 years may be granted Honorary Emeritus Status for Meritorious Service. Candidates for honorary emeritus status must have a significant number of years of service and a record of meritorious performance in one or more of the following: (a) a substantive record of scholarly achievement commensurate with national or international standards within the specific discipline, (b) a record of outstanding teaching and or educational contributions, (c) clear evidence of service to the University beyond the normal expectations, (d) clear evidence of exceptional institutional leadership, advancement of the University or extraordinary service to students.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.

[Redacted Signature]

**University Executive Officer**  
**Rhonda Longworth, Ph.D.**

9/27/23  
**Date**



**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**  
Academic and Student Affairs

**HONORARY EMERITUS FACULTY STATUS RECOMMENDATION**

The Department or School of Communication, Media & Theatre Arts recommends the awarding of **Emeritus Faculty Status** for the following retiring/retired faculty member:

Honorary

Name of Faculty Member: Karen Smith-Meyer

Current Status/Rank at EMU: Professor

Date of Hire at EMU: September 1, 1987 Retirement Date: (passed away) May 1, 2001

Number of Years at EMU: 14 years (Minimum of 15 years of service required)

Degree(s)/Institutions      Doctoral: MFA - Eastern Michigan University - 1986



Masters: Ohio University- 1975 & Eastern Michigan University- 1984

Baccalaureate BFA - Ithaca College 1974

Please Attach a Brief Statement of Support to this 2 page application

Emeritus Faculty status is contingent upon the approval of the Board of Regents. Candidates, once approved, will be awarded Emeritus status after their official retirement date. This information will be kept on file in the Provost's Office.

Emeritus Professor, Patricia Moore Zimmer 5/2/2023

Recommended by	(please print)	Date		
Dr. Lee Stille		5/5/2023		5/10/2023
Department Head		Date	Dean	Date
		9/15/23		9-29-2023
Provost		Date		Date Submitted to Board of Regents

Please continue to page 2 of this application.

Date: May 2, 2023

To: Rhonda Longworth, Provost and Head of Academic Affairs

From: Patricia Moore Zimmer, Professor Emerita, CMTA

Subject: Honorary Emeritus Status for Professor Karen Smith-Meyer

I am honored to recommend my late colleague, Professor Karen Smith-Meyer, for posthumous honorary emeritus status.

Professor Smith-Meyer served EMU as both a full-time lecturer and tenure-track/tenured faculty member. She passed away in 2001 after making sustained and substantial contributions to Eastern Michigan University.

There can be no doubt about Professor Smith-Meyer's commitment to our institution. She received both her Master of Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from EMU's School of Communication, Media and Theatre Arts. She was, in fact, the first-ever recipient of EMU's then-new MFA in Drama/Theatre for the Young.

When senior faculty in her program retired, she was hired as a full-time lecturer and, then, after a national search, as tenure-track faculty. Sadly, she died just short of celebrating 15 years as tenure-track faculty.

Her impact on the department and program in which she taught was consequential and lasting. As a theatre artist, she directed numerous EMU theatre mainstage and touring productions for young and family audiences. She was named as head of the then newly-formed Theatre and Educational Drama area, which merged areas of CMTA into a new administrative unit. She was beloved as an effective teacher, a fine theatre director, exceptional thesis mentor and departmental colleague. In myriad ways, she was active in service to the department and university.

Professor Smith-Meyer also represented EMU effectively at the national level, serving as co-editor for *Stage of the Art*, a publication of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. She served her professional organization in other ways as well, including serving as chair of the planning team for AATE's complex national convention.

It is with heartfelt admiration and the greatest enthusiasm that I offer my strongest support for granting honorary emeritus status to Professor Karen Smith-Meyer.