

February 8, 2011

Dear President Glassner,

With gratitude for his engrossing teaching, prolific scholarship and dedicated service to the College and the community, I nominate Pamplin Professor of History, Stephen Dow Beckham, for emeritus status at Lewis & Clark.

Steve Beckham has long been one of the College's outstanding teachers, awing students with his encyclopedic knowledge, his passion for his subject, and his enthusiasm for the teaching enterprise. His courses in Northwest history, Indian peoples, and environmental history have inspired generations of students, who have found their own life work as researchers, lawyers, professors, archivists, curators, and museum professionals in his history courses. It is not just our own community of students and alumni who testify to Steve's inspiring teaching. The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) named Steve the Oregon baccalaureate professor of the year for 1992-93. Two years later, the American Historical Association gave him the Eugene Asher Distinguished Teaching Award certifying his stature as the best history professor in the nation.

Steve's scholarly contribution has been as a preeminent historian of the native peoples of our Pacific Northwest, beginning with his lyric *Requiem For a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen* (1973), continuing through his contribution to a Smithsonian handbook, and most recently his editing of an elegant anthology which includes a lifetime's collection of primary sources, *Oregon's Indians: Voices from Two Centuries*. Steve has collected, edited and arranged these pieces, which range from the early 1800s to the immediate past, and will be invaluable to many different constituencies, local and national--schoolteachers, scholars, casual readers, and native people seeking remnants of a sparsely-documented past.

Equally rich, however, have been his contributions in the field of "public history"—the lending of a historical perspective to ordinary people, needful of the insights of the historical record to help them to make good law, site bridges appropriately and commemorate a local historical tradition. Over decades, Steve Beckham has been perhaps *the* leading historian of this region, one who works with plats, deeds, and estate records to document trade routes and patterns, tribal settlements and treaties, the growth of local elites and businesses, the changing uses and abuses of the land. He has appeared as an expert on nine documentary film and television projects focusing on regional, state and local history, and curated dozens of museum and public history exhibits around the world, including most recently as writer for sixteen panels in the Oregon State Capitol, nine panels for our own Watzek, and a major exhibit to open this year at the Oregon Historical Society. His work brings the expertise of the academy and the skills of historical research into the public eye, and suggests the continued relevance of the past to all Oregonians.



Of all his many gifts, Steve's gifts to this College are perhaps most important to us today. He has written the history of the College and its buildings, taught at the Law School and helped it look for a dean, worked on the College's celebration of the Lewis & Clark bicentennial, donated to the library, chaired the history department, and as an inaugural Pamplin professor, launched and nourished the Dr. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr. Society of Fellows. He has mightily promoted the welfare of Lewis & Clark to all who would listen. Today I honor Stephen Dow Beckham for his role as one of the College's most effective teachers and ambassadors by nominating him for the status of professor of history emeritus, commencing in May 2011.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jane" and last name "Hunter" clearly distinguishable.

Jane Hunter
Interim Dean of the College
Professor of History