March 20, 2019

TO: Faculty, Staff and Students, Faculty of Social Work

FROM: Janice Ristock, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

RE: Recommendation: Appointment of Dr. Michael Yellow Bird
Dean, Faculty of Social Work

I am very pleased to advise that, at its March 19, 2019 meeting, the Board of Governors approved the appointment of Dr. Michael Yellow Bird as Dean of the Faculty of Social Work effective July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2024. Dr. Yellow Bird will also hold an appointment as tenured Professor in the Faculty of Social Work.

Dr. Yellow Bird received a PhD in social welfare from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, a MSW from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and a BSW from the University of North Dakota. Currently, Dr. Yellow Bird is a Professor of Sociology and Anthropology and Director of the Tribal and Indigenous Peoples Studies Program at North Dakota State University. He joined North Dakota State University in 2014. Prior to this, he held academic and administrative positions at Humboldt State University where he served as Director of the MSW Program; and before that as Director of the Indigenous Nation Studies Program at the University of Kansas. Early in his career, Dr. Yellow Bird was the Tribal Health Director and Human Resources Administrator for his community -- Three Affiliated Tribes.

His interdisciplinary research expertise spans areas such as, Indigenous peoples’ health, leadership and cultural rights; the effects of colonization and methods of decolonization; decolonizing social work approaches; neurodecolonization and mind body approaches; and traditional mindfulness and contemplative practices. He has disseminated his work in several books, book chapters, articles, community scholarship, manuscripts, reports and program evaluations. He has presented his work locally, nationally and internationally.

Dr. Yellow Bird has been an active participant on various department, college and university level committees including Chair of the Curriculum, Planning and Development Committees, Executive Committees, and several faculty search committees. He also maintains strong community linkages serving on boards, advisory committees and national committees. He has served on the editorial boards for The American Indian Quarterly, the Indigenous Nations Studies Journal and the International Canadian Journal of Mental Health.
Given Dr. Yellow Bird's demonstrated leadership skills, his deep commitment to Indigenous success, and international recognition in his field, I am confident that the faculty and the University of Manitoba will be well served under his leadership. Please join me in extending congratulations to Michael on his appointment as Dean and Professor, Faculty of Social Work.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the appointment process, including members of the Presidential Advisory Committee and the many individuals who provided valuable input into this appointment. Finally, I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Diane Hiebert-Murphy who has been serving in the dual role as Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs) and Acting Dean of Social Work over the past year.

cc: Dr. M. Yellow Bird
Dr. D. Hiebert-Murphy
Presidential Advisory Committee to Appoint a Dean, Faculty of Social Work