

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

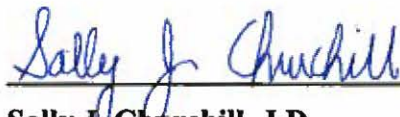
Sherril A. Smith, M.F.A., Catherine B. Heller Collegiate Professor of Art and professor of art in the Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2019.

Professor Smith received her B.A. degree from Stanford University in 1965 and her M.F.A. degree from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1967. Following positions in the textile industry in New York, she began her teaching career as an instructor at Colorado State University in 1971. She joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1974, and was promoted to associate professor in 1978, and professor in 1983. Professor Smith served as interim dean in 1999 and as associate dean for graduate studies from 1997-2004. She was named the Catherine B. Heller Collegiate Professor of Art in 1998.

A distinguished and innovative fiber artist, Professor Smith was a seminal figure in the evolution of weaving and fiber arts from a handicraft and industrial process to an established form of creative practice. Among her peers, she has been recognized for a number of important innovations in weaving processes and structures as well as her incorporation of elements of science, astronomy, nature, and classical studies in her creative work. Professor Smith's work has been exhibited extensively across the globe in major shows, galleries, and numerous biennales focused on fiber arts. Her work has been featured in influential books and catalogs on fiber arts and can be found in the permanent collections of more than 50 museums and corporations. She was elected a fellow of the American Crafts Council in 2012. Professor Smith's teaching was rooted in the rigor and focus required for creative development and in the importance of intellectual curiosity, interdisciplinary exploration, and awareness of the natural world to an artist's growth. She has inspired generations of artists to embrace fiber arts as their focus for creative expression and nearly single-handedly built the strong, vibrant fibers program in the Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design.

The Regents now salute this distinguished artist and educator for her dedicated service by naming **Sherril A. Smith, Catherine B. Heller Collegiate Professor Emerita of Art and professor emerita of art.**

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.

Vice President and Secretary of the University

June 2019