

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

*Regents Communication*

**ACTION REQUEST**

**Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement**

**Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir**

**Virginia E. Murphy, M.A.**, lecturer IV in the Residential College and lecturer II in the Program in the Environment, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2025.


Ms. Murphy earned her B.A. from the University of Maryland in 1999 and her M.A., with distinction, from Georgetown University in 2002. She joined the University of Michigan faculty in 2007 as a member of the Social Theory and Practice program, later also holding an appointment in the Program in the Environment. Over her career, she received multiple accolades for teaching excellence, including the Program in the Environment Outstanding Instructor Award (2013) and the LSA Individual Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education (2025).

A dedicated and innovative teacher, Ms. Murphy developed and taught courses on environmental justice, literature, and sustainable food systems, such as Social Theory & Practice Senior Thesis Seminar, Literature of Environmental Justice, Corn in East Quad, and Environmental Activism. She also created the Introduction to Environmental Literature course, connecting students to global environmental challenges through literature and experiential learning. Her classes often integrated interdisciplinary readings, community-based projects, and fieldwork, enabling students to develop both critical perspectives and practical skills. As faculty director of the East Quad Garden, she established a living laboratory that fostered community engagement, student leadership, and hands-on education in sustainable agriculture.

Beyond the classroom, she served on the RC Executive Committee, faculty hiring and review committees, and played a central role in organizing the RC's 2019 inaugural conference, *The Community of Food, Society, and Justice*, which brought together faculty, students, and alumni to showcase the college's impact. Her public scholarship and community service included invited talks, panel discussions, and leadership in sustainability-focused nonprofit organizations. She also contributed to campus-wide initiatives on environmental sustainability, bridging academic and community interests.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and educator by naming **Virginia E. Murphy, lecturer IV emerita in the Residential College and lecturer II emerita in the Program in the Environment.**

**Requested by:**



**Jon Kinsey**  
Vice President and Secretary of the University

**February 2026**