

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Death

Action Requested: Adoption of Memorial Statement

The Regents of the University of Michigan acknowledge with profound sadness the death of **Michael C. Schoenfeldt, Ph.D.**, John R. Knott, Jr. Collegiate Professorship in English Literature and professor of English language and literature in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Professor Schoenfeldt died on September 4, 2025.

Professor Schoenfeldt received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley in 1985 and joined the University of Michigan Department of English as an assistant professor in September 1985. He was promoted to the rank of associate professor in 1991 and to professor in 1999. He received his collegiate professorship in 2010.

Professor Schoenfeldt was an internationally recognized scholar of Renaissance literature. He was the author of two major monographs and over fifty articles, as well as the editor of four collections of scholarly essays on the poetry of William Shakespeare, John Donne, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton. His *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1999) established him as a major voice in promoting the use of historical understandings of embodied selfhood and emotion to understand late sixteenth and seventeenth century poetry. He regularly presented his research on literary criticism, historicism, and the embodied experiences of sensation, emotion, pleasure, illness, pain, and disability at national and international venues. Professor Schoenfeldt received several awards from the University of Michigan, including a Faculty Recognition Award, the Michigan Humanities Award, and an Institute for the Humanities fellowship. He was a Senior Faculty Fellow in the Michigan Society of Fellows from 2006-10. His enthusiastic teaching and avid mentorship of undergraduate and graduate students are legendary and have been recognized by his twice receiving the Excellence in Education Award as well as the John H. D'Arms Faculty Award for Distinguished Graduate Mentoring in the Humanities. He served on over twenty Michigan dissertation committees and as an external examiner for Ph.D. theses in Europe and Canada. National and international recognition include a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities and election as president of the John Donne Society. He was a Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge, and was honored as a Visiting Fellow Commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge, and an Elected Fellow at King's College, Cambridge.

Professor Schoenfeldt was a dedicated member of the college, providing steady leadership within the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. He was director of the Program in Medieval and Early Modern Studies from 1999-2004, served as associate dean for the humanities in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts from 2004-2008, served on the College Executive Committee from 2015-18, and chaired the Department of English from 2009-2015.

As we mourn the loss of our beloved colleague, we extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Leslie; his sons, Ben and Aaron; his daughters-in-law, Huanyi and Camille; his granddaughters, Elaine and Eloise; his stepchildren, Amy and Ethan; his brother and sister-in-law, Patrick and Sherry; and his many loving relatives and friends.

Requested by:



Jon Kinsey
Vice President and Secretary of the University

February 2026