Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement
Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Brian B. Schmidt, D.Phil., professor of Hebrew Bible in the Department of Middle East Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2022.

Brian Schmidt attended Florida State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1977. He received a Master of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in 1983. He then attended the University of Oxford where he earned his doctorate in religion and theology in 1992. Professor Schmidt joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1992, and was promoted to associate professor in 1997, and professor in 2017.

Professor Schmidt’s research has focused on the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible; Ancient Israelite, Canaanite, and Syrian religions, cultures, languages, and literatures; and Ancient Israelite historiography and history. He is the author or editor of numerous books – including The Materiality of Power: Explorations in the Social History of Early Israelite Magic (2016) and Contextualizing Israel’s Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality, and Literary Production (2015) – and articles. In addition, he founded and directed the important monograph series, Archaeology and Biblical Studies, an imprint of the Society of Biblical Literature, and has personally edited several volumes of essays at the cutting edge of contemporary Biblical studies. His many doctoral students have also made significant contributions to this field.

Professor Schmidt has been a prolific public lecturer and has held visiting positions at (among other institutions) the Pacific School of Religion, Hong Kong University, and the University of Sydney (Australia). He has also received numerous research grants, including from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

His active service on many committees at the University of Michigan and in professional societies and his coaching of children’s sports in Ann Arbor and involvement in mentoring troubled youth in the Outward Bound Wilderness program are indicative of his community spirit.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar by naming Brian B. Schmidt, professor emeritus of Hebrew Bible, Department of Middle East Studies.

Requested by:

Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University May 2022