

The University of Michigan Regents Communication

Request for Action

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Jeffrey C. Alt, Ph.D., research professor, Earth and environmental sciences in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 24, 2026.

Professor Alt received his B.S. with Honors from the University of Michigan in 1975, his M.S. from the University of Miami in 1981, and his Ph.D. from the University of Miami in 1984. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant research scientist in 1989, and was promoted to associate research scientist in 1991, research scientist in 1998, and research professor in 2011.

Professor Alt's career illuminated the deep connections between fluid-rock interaction, geochemical cycling, and microbial life in Earth's oceanic lithosphere. His research encompassed the nature of geochemical reactions, the geothermal conditions under which they occur, and the significance of these interactions to the deep biosphere, newly recognized in oceanic basement rocks. His early work centered on the geochemistry of submarine hydrothermal systems, providing the first integrated views on plumbing of these systems and subsequent seafloor alteration. Professor Alt then shifted focus to carbon and sulfur cycling over geologic time. His work on oceanic basalts demonstrated that more carbon is taken up by basalts than is degassed by mid-ocean ridge volcanoes. His later work provided geochemical evidence for a subsurface microbial biosphere that creates chemical energy through sulfate reduction in oceanic basement rocks devoid of organic carbon.

Professor Alt was elected a fellow of both the American Geophysical Union (2017) and the Geological Society of America (2004). He served as Distinguished Lecturer for the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (2009–2010) and received the Research Scientist Achievement Award (2001) and Excellence in Research Award (1999) from the University of Michigan. Professor Alt further contributed as an associate editor of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta*, on the editorial board of *Chemical Geology*, and on the RIDGE Steering Committee. He shared his knowledge of the ocean's geology with generations of UM students through regular teaching at introductory and advanced levels.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Jeffrey C. Alt, research professor emeritus, Earth and environmental sciences.**

Requested by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Kinsey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jon Kinsey

Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2026