

# The University of Michigan Regents Communication

## Request for Action

### Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

#### Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

**Ellen Rowe, M.M.**, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Earl V. Collegiate Professor of Music, professor of music (jazz studies), and chair of conducting in the School of Music, Theatre & Dance, retired from active faculty status on May 24, 2026.

Professor Rowe holds both a Bachelor of Music in music education (High Distinction, 1980) and a Master of Music in Jazz and Contemporary Media/Writing (1982) from the Eastman School of Music. She began her academic career at the University of Connecticut, serving as director of jazz studies from 1984 to 1996. Since joining the University of Michigan in 1996, Professor Rowe has provided exemplary service as professor, coordinator of undergraduate jazz studies and department chair, shaping the growth and national reputation of jazz studies at Michigan. Her commitment to the university includes chairing the school's Visioning Committee, roles on the SMTD Executive and Dean Search Committees, Scholarship Committee, and numerous faculty searches.

Professor Rowe is recognized for her professional artistry, including conducting, performing and composing. She has performed nationally and internationally, including major festivals in Europe and South America and was the first woman to conduct several state all-state jazz ensembles in the U.S. Her acclaimed groups, the Ellen Rowe Trio, Quartet, and Octet, regularly perform at top venues, and her commissioned compositions and arrangements are performed in schools around the country and abroad. Her six albums as a leader are celebrated for their creativity and advocacy, most notably "Momentum: Portraits of Women in Motion."

A passionate mentor, Professor Rowe founded the influential Sisters in Jazz Collegiate Combo Competition, championing gender diversity in the field. Her service as a clinician, adjudicator, and consultant is well recognized at national and international conferences. Professor Rowe's students thrive as performers, educators, and composers, reflecting her transformative teaching and mentorship at Michigan. Professor Rowe's professional honors include the Arthur F. Thurnau Professorship, as well as the CEW+ Rhetaugh G. Dumas Award. She has served as a jurist and for organizations such as the Jazz Education Network, American Pianists Association, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additionally, she has authored and contributed chapters to prominent jazz publications, served on numerous boards, and is a frequent presence on national radio and in media.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Ellen Rowe, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emerita, Earl V. Collegiate Professor Emerita of Music, professor emerita of music (jazz studies).**

Requested by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Kinsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being particularly large and stylized.

**Jon Kinsey**

Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2026