

# The University of Michigan Regents Communication

## Request for Action

### Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

#### Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

**Brenda L. Volling, Ph.D.**, Lois Wladis Hoffman Collegiate Professor of Psychology and professor of psychology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 24, 2026.

Professor Volling received her B.S. (1982) degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and her M.S. (1985) and Ph.D. (1990) degrees from The Pennsylvania State University. Professor Volling joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1992, and was promoted to associate professor in 1999, and professor in 2006. Professor Volling was appointed the Lois Wladis Hoffman Collegiate Professor of Psychology in 2018.

Professor Volling is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking research on family systems and early socio-emotional development. Her scholarship fundamentally transformed understanding of sibling relationships, father involvement, and family transitions during early childhood. As principal investigator of the landmark Family Transitions Study, she produced the first comprehensive longitudinal examination of how families reorganize following the birth of a second child. This research challenged prevailing assumptions about sibling rivalry and revealed that most children show resilience rather than distress during this transition. Professor Volling pioneered the scientific study of fathers' contributions to child development when this domain was substantially neglected, demonstrating their unique contributions, particularly through physically activating play and promoting children's emotional regulation and social competence.

Professor Volling provided exemplary service to the university. As director of the Center for Human Growth and Development, she strengthened interdisciplinary collaborations and mentored junior faculty across campus. She served as chair of Developmental Psychology, associate chair of Undergraduate Studies in Psychology, and on numerous university committees. Her academic and professional honors include the MICHR Distinguished Clinical and Translational Research Mentor Award; the LSA Excellence in Education Award; the University of Michigan Faculty Recognition Award for Outstanding Research, Teaching, and Service; and fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Brenda L. Volling, Lois Wladis Hoffman Collegiate Professor Emerita of Psychology and professor emerita of psychology.**

Requested by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Kinsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "K".

**Jon Kinsey**

Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2026