

# The University of Michigan Regents Communication

## Item for Information

**Subject: Henry Russel Lecturer for 2027**

### Background

The Henry Russel Awards Faculty Advisory Committee, chaired by Dean Michael J. Solomon, met recently and upon their recommendation I am pleased to confirm that John Jonides, the Edward E. Smith Distinguished University Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Acting Co-Director, Magnetic Resonance Imaging Facility, Professor of Radiology, Medical School and Professor of Psychology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts will be the Henry Russel Lecturer for 2027. Professor Jonides will deliver the Russel Lecture in the Winter Term of 2027.

The Henry Russel Lectureship is the highest honor that the University bestows upon a senior member of its faculty. A description of the contributions of this extraordinary faculty member is attached.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Domenico Grasso', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Domenico Grasso**  
President

June 2026

Attachment

## **John Jonides**

John Jonides, Edward E. Smith Distinguished University Professor of psychology and neuroscience, and professor of radiology in the Medical School, is an innovative architect of modern cognitive neuroscience. His work illuminates how the mind supports attention, working memory, and cognitive control—core capacities that underlie learning, decision-making, and everyday functioning. An early leader in the use of human brain imaging to address foundational questions about cognition, Professor Jonides helped move the field beyond simply locating functions in the brain to building psychologically rich, mechanistic models of how cognitive processes are implemented in neural systems. His scholarship has shaped both basic science and translational research that addresses pressing challenges in education, mental health, and the management of cognitive aging. Professor Jonides established that distinct regions of the frontal cortex contribute differentially to the maintenance versus manipulation of information in working memory and how these anatomical relationships have consequences for cognitive processing. Building on these empirical discoveries, he and his collaborators proposed a highly influential taxonomy of executive functions (Smith & Jonides, 1999), which remains among the most widely cited frameworks in the field. By applying his taxonomy of executive functions, he has advanced understanding of real-world cognitive challenges in conditions such as major depressive disorder (MDD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Most recently, Professor Jonides has studied working memory and executive control across the lifespan, including research on training-related plasticity and work incorporating brain stimulation (tDCS) to potentially enhance training effects. His scholarship has led to insights into education, informing curricular approaches to training self-control among school-age children, including large-scale randomized trials of curricula aimed at strengthening cognitive control and study skills.

Professor Jonides' prolific and wide-ranging scholarship appears in premier journals in psychology and in top scientific journals such as *Science*, *Nature*, and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. His impact is reflected in extraordinary quantitative indices, including more than 87,000 citations and an h-index of 120. His research has been supported continuously by major funding agencies and foundations, including the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health, National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Research, and the McDonnell Foundation. In addition, he has contributed sustained professional service to the field through editorial leadership and advising, including service on editorial boards and as editor-in-chief of *Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Neuroscience* and later as senior editor of *Psychological Science*. Professor Jonides has been recognized for his transformative scholarship, including the William James Fellow Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Association for Psychological Science and the Fred Kavli Award for Distinguished Career Contributions from the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, and he is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His U-M honors include the

Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Excellence in Research Award.

Professor Jonides' influence is equally profound in teaching, mentoring, and institution-building. A generous and highly collaborative colleague, he has trained and inspired generations of scientists and is widely known for his clarity of thought and commitment to rigorous inquiry. His former students and postdoctoral fellows—including many who are now leading cognitive neuroscientists—regularly describe him as a model of intellectual curiosity, careful reasoning, and genuine enthusiasm for discovery. At the University of Michigan, his dedicated citizenship spans decades. He served as director of the Center for Human Performance for nearly a decade and later as associate dean for research and facilities. During this period, he designed, implemented, and supervised the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), a groundbreaking initiative among the first of its kind nationally, created to increase retention and success of underrepresented students by connecting them with faculty research and mentoring. Since 2001, he has co-directed the Functional MRI Laboratory, a research facility he helped build into a cornerstone resource for the campus community. Extending this impact nationally, he founded and directed Michigan's Summer Neuroimaging Training course for more than a decade, a two-week summer program that has educated faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows at Michigan and across the country in the foundations and use of human brain imaging as a research tool.

Professor Jonides earned his B.A. (1969) in psychology from Johns Hopkins University, followed by an M.Ed. (1971) in education from Johns Hopkins University and an M.A. (1972) and Ph.D. (1975) in psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. He joined the University of Michigan faculty in 1975 as assistant professor of psychology and was promoted to associate professor in 1980 and professor in 1986. In 2004, he was named Edward E. Smith Collegiate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, and in 2025 he was named Edward E. Smith Distinguished University Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience. He has served as co-director of the fMRI Center since 2001 and was appointed professor of radiology in the Medical School in 2024.

As an innovative cognitive neuroscientist whose research has transformed understanding of attention, working memory, and executive control, Professor Jonides' many contributions have brought distinction to the University of Michigan and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and he is an exceptionally worthy selection as the 2027 Henry Russel Lecturer.