

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Patricia K. Smith, Ph.D., professor of economics, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, University of Michigan-Dearborn, retired from active faculty status on April 30, 2021.

Professor Smith received her B.A. (1981) degree from the University of Wyoming and her M.A. (1983) and Ph.D. (1986) degrees from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. She joined the University of Michigan-Dearborn faculty as an assistant professor in 1988, and was promoted to associate professor in 1994, and professor in 2003.

For 35 years, Professor Smith taught a range of courses across the economics discipline. One of our university's most accomplished instructors, Professor Smith was awarded the campus' Distinguished Teaching Award in 2020. Her research deploys evidence-based social science methods to test hypotheses drawn from popular culture. She used this approach to debunk the freshman 15 myth about weight gain among first-year college students. In addition, her book *Obesity Among Low Income Americans: Is Public Assistance the Problem?* (2009) systematically tested the linkages between poverty, welfare, and obesity. Over the course of her career, Professor Smith built a national reputation with her research on the interplay between economic constraints and dietary choices.

Professor Smith's service to the university is extensive. She led a task force on faculty mentoring for the Faculty Senate, directed the Women's Studies Program, and brought the Poverty Reduction Initiative's poverty simulation to campus. She also contributed to numerous other committees at the departmental, college, and university levels.

A testament to her work on behalf of women across the different facets of her career, she was awarded the Sarah Goddard Power Award from the Academic Women's Caucus of the University of Michigan in 1997 and the Susan B. Anthony Award from the University of Michigan-Dearborn in 1998.

The Regents now salute this distinguished economist for her many years of service to the University of Michigan-Dearborn by naming **Patricia K. Smith, professor emerita of economics**.

Requested by:



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

September 2021