

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Roberto Merlin, Ph.D., Peter A. Franken Collegiate Professor of Physics and professor of physics in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2025.

Professor Roberto Merlin earned his B.S. in Physics from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1973, and his Ph.D. from the Universität Stuttgart, Germany in 1978. He held a postdoctoral research associate position at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign until 1980. In 1980, he joined the University of Michigan as an assistant professor of physics, rising to associate professor in 1985 and professor in 1989. In 2000, he was also appointed professor of electrical engineering and computer science. In 2009, he was named Peter A. Franken Collegiate Professor of Physics.

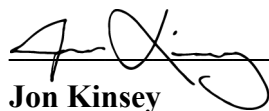
Throughout his distinguished career in research, teaching, mentoring, and service, Professor Merlin has made a profound impact on the scientific community. He served as associate chair for research and facilities in the Department of Physics; director of the AFOSR MURI Centers on Phonon Control for Enhanced Device Performance and on Negative Index Materials; and director of the Optical Physics Interdisciplinary Laboratory. He contributed extensively to scholarly publishing as editor of the *Springer Series in Solid-State Sciences* (1998–2021), of *Solid State Communications* (2002–2021), and as a division associate editor of *Physical Review Letters* (2012–2018). As a dedicated educator, he taught a broad range of undergraduate and graduate courses, supervised 18 undergraduate and 28 doctoral students, and mentored more than 12 postdoctoral researchers and visiting scientists, many of whom have become leaders in academia and industry.

Professor Merlin is a world leader in condensed matter and optical physics, focusing on optical phenomena across diverse material systems. He is renowned for pioneering experimental studies on the optical generation, detection, and control of novel material effects and for groundbreaking discoveries in optical science. He has made influential theoretical contributions on negative-index materials, evanescent-field interference, and stimulated Raman scattering. His pursuit of understanding and engineering materials through advanced optical probes has made him one of the most recognized figures in condensed matter and optical science. His career includes 237 publications, four books, 97 invited conference presentations, and over 140 seminars and colloquia.

He has received numerous honors and awards, including the Ellis R. Lippincott Award from the Optical Society (2017), the Simons Fellowship in Theoretical Physics (2013), the Guggenheim Fellowship (2007), the Frank Isakson Prize from the American Physical Society (2006), and fellowships from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (2015), the Optical Society (2000), the American Physical Society (1996), and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (1987).

The Regents now salute this distinguished scientist by naming **Roberto Merlin, Peter A. Franken Collegiate Professor Emeritus of Physics and professor emeritus of physics.**

Requested by:



Jon Kinsey
Vice President and Secretary of the University

November 2025