

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

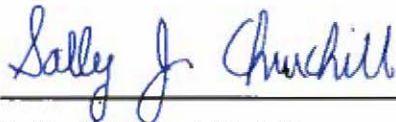
Elliot H. Gertel, M.Phil., M.S.L.S., Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica and senior associate librarian in the University Library, retired from active faculty status on December 30, 2018.

Mr. Gertel received his B.A. degree from Marlboro College (1973), his M.Phil. degree from Oxford University (1988), and his M.S.L.S. degree from the University of Kentucky (1990). He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an associate librarian and the inaugural Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica in 1999, and was promoted to senior associate librarian in 2003.

In his nearly twenty years of service, Mr. Gertel expanded the Judaica collection into one of the most significant of such collections in the U.S., containing well over 150,000 items. He acquired or facilitated donations of many important collections in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, and Western languages. When the University Library, in collaboration with the Frankel Center, acquired the Harris Jewish Heritage Collection in 2003, Mr. Gertel helped oversee the transfer of several thousand items and subsequently became the curator of this collection. Over the years, Mr. Gertel provided outstanding research and instruction services to faculty and curated Judaica exhibits on campus. He taught an advanced Yiddish class and, for years, facilitated the weekly Yiddish conversation group. His support for the Yiddish Program as well as his tireless collecting efforts played a significant role in establishing the University of Michigan as a leading center of Yiddish studies. In addition to his university contributions, Mr. Gertel was a prominent figure in Jewish librarianship at the national level. He served in various leadership capacities in the Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL), chaired the Jewish Information Committee of the American Library Association (ALA) Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table, and served on the ALA Reference and User Services Association's Sophie Brody Medal Committee. He vigorously worked on forging a strong connection between the AJL and the ALA. For many years, he was considered a prime mover of the AJL. He was an outstanding curator who left an important legacy to the University of Michigan Library and the academic community at large.

The Regents now salute this distinguished librarian for his dedicated service by naming **Elliot H. Gertel, Irving M. Hermelin Curator Emeritus of Judaica and senior associate librarian emeritus**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.

Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2019