

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

George C. Alter, Ph.D., research professor, Population Studies Center and research professor, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research in the Institute for Social Research and professor of history in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2020.

Professor Alter received his B.A. (1971) and Ph.D. (1978) degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and his M.A. (1978) degree from the University of Michigan. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Michigan, he was a professor of history and director of the Population Institute for Research and Training at Indiana University. Professor Alter joined the University of Michigan faculty as a research professor, professor, and associate director of the Inter-university Consortium for Social and Political Research (ICPSR) in 2007. Professor Alter served as executive director of ICPSR from 2011-16.

Professor Alter's research integrated theory and methods from demography, economics, and family history with historical sources to understand demographic behaviors in the past. His book *Family and the Female Life Course* (1988) was one of the first applications of event history analysis to historical data, and he was a founder of the Eurasia Project on Population and Family History, which compared demographic responses to economic stress in historical Europe and Asia. He was also known for work on historical trends in fertility, stature, and morbidity. In 2011, he was president of the Social Science History Association. As director of ICPSR, Professor Alter became active in international efforts to promote research transparency, data sharing, and secure access to confidential research data. His publications described how research data can be shared and re-analyzed while protecting the privacy of research subjects. Recently, Professor Alter developed new metadata standards to improve the reusability and interoperability of research data.

The Regents now salute this distinguished teacher, scholar, and researcher by naming **George C. Alter, research professor emeritus, Population Studies Center, research professor emeritus, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, and professor emeritus of history.**

Requested by:



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

December 2020