

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Walter Cohen, Ph.D., professor of English language and literature in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2024.

Professor Cohen earned his B.A. degree, with great distinction, in English from Stanford University in 1971. He then attended the University of California, Berkeley where he earned his doctorate in comparative literature in 1980. He was appointed assistant professor of comparative literature at Cornell University in 1980 and promoted to associate professor in 1986 and professor in 1992. Professor Cohen served as dean of the Graduate School from 1993-2001, as vice provost from 1998-2004, and as senior associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 2009-13. From 1998-1999, he was the national president of the Association of Graduate Schools. He joined the University of Michigan as professor of English language and literature in 2014.

Professor Cohen is a preeminent scholar of comparative literary history, with expertise in Renaissance and early modern studies. He has written extensively on Renaissance drama, Marxist literary criticism, world literature, and the profession of literary studies. He is the author of two major monographs and over forty articles, and he is co-editor of the definitive anthology, *The Norton Shakespeare*, now in its third edition. Professor Cohen's first monograph, *Drama of a Nation: Public Theater in Renaissance England and Spain*, was an exhaustively researched, pioneering study of the co-occurring, flourishing theaters of two nationally distinct, absolutist monarchies. His magisterial second monograph, *A History of European Literature: The West and the World from Antiquity to the Present*, surveyed some 5,000 years of writing to develop a transformative paradigm for re-interpreting the history of European literature within a global field. A third single-author monograph is nearing completion.

Professor Cohen's research has been widely cited, reviewed, and reprinted. *A History of European Literature* was translated into Chinese; several of his articles have been translated into German and Portuguese. He has delivered over 100 papers, invited lectures, and keynote addresses, including at leading universities across the United States and Europe. His extensive record of service to the profession includes dozens of manuscripts, program, and appointment and promotion reviews for premier universities and university presses in the United States and the United Kingdom. An award-winning teacher and dedicated mentor, he taught at every level of the curriculum and chaired or served on the committees of over 100 graduate students.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar by naming **Walter Cohen, professor emeritus of English language and literature**.

Requested by:



Jon Kinsey
Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2024