

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

Adopted by the Regents

December 18, 2008

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Luis O. Gómez, Ph.D., Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, professor of Asian languages and cultures, and professor of psychology and religious studies in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, will retire from active faculty status on December 31, 2008.

Professor Gómez received his B.A. degree from the University of Puerto Rico in 1963 and his Ph.D. degree in Buddhist Studies from Yale University in 1967. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an associate professor in 1973 and was promoted to professor in 1979. In 1997 he completed a second Ph.D. degree in clinical psychology from the University of Michigan. He was appointed professor of psychology and religious studies in 1999.

Professor Gómez founded Michigan's highly regarded Ph.D. program in Buddhist studies and served as chair of the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures from 1981-89 and as acting chair from 2002-03. That his students specialized in Chinese, Japanese, Indo-Tibetan, Indian, Thai, and Burmese Buddhism testifies to his wide-ranging knowledge and to his high level of proficiency in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese, as well as several European languages (in addition to his native Spanish). Professor Gómez's scholarship on Buddhism covered a remarkable range of important topics, including Indian, Tibetan, Chinese, and pan-Asian Buddhism, with a particular emphasis on the literature and religious vision of the Mahayana. He wrote a number of groundbreaking articles devoted to the "sudden vs. gradual" dichotomy in both early Chinese Chan and at the Samye Debate in Tibet. His book, *Land of Bliss: The Paradise of the Buddha of Measureless Light* (1996) is considered the definitive study of a highly influential Buddhist scripture. Professor Gómez was named the Charles O. Huckler Professor of Buddhist Studies in 1986 and in recognition of his outstanding undergraduate teaching, was named Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in 1997. His work as a graduate mentor was honored in 1995, when he received the John H. D'Arms Award for Distinguished Graduate Mentoring in the Humanities.

The Regents now salute this distinguished teacher and researcher by naming **Luis O. Gómez Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emeritus, professor emeritus of Asian languages and cultures, and professor emeritus of psychology and religious studies.**

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.

Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2008