

# M | LSA

200 years of history, highlights, and milestones of the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and Arts.

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## 1817

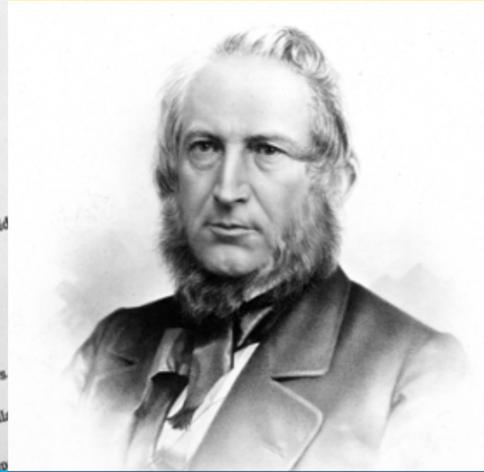
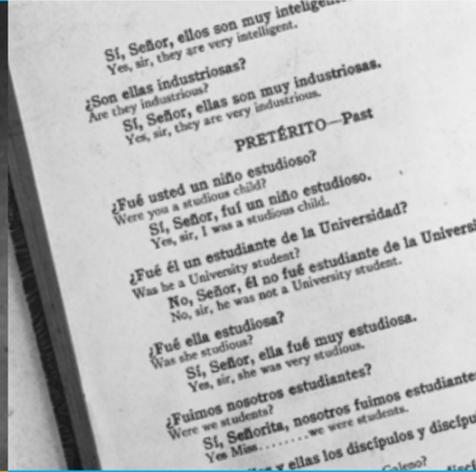
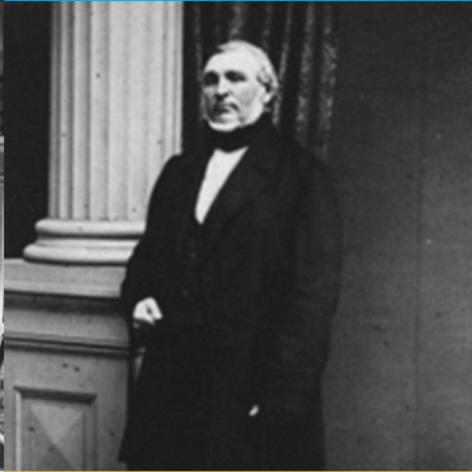
The University of Michigan is founded. Originally called the Catholepistemiad, or University of Michigania, its first building was on Bates Street in Detroit.

## 1837

The Michigan legislature passes an act creating the University of Michigan and its three departments, Law, Medicine, and "the Department of Literature, Science and the Arts."

## 1838

Influential botanist Dr. Asa Gray becomes the first professor of U-M. He never taught a class, but he did purchase 3,700 books to start the U-M library.



## 1841

Professor of Mathematics George Palmer Williams gives the first lecture in U-M history to seven students in Mason Hall.

## 1846

Professor Louis Fasquelle of France becomes the first foreign born faculty member. French is the first modern language taught at the University.

## 1848

Spanish is taught for the first time.

## 1852

Psychology is taught for the first time.



## 1854

The Detroit Observatory is built. The state of the art facility was the crown jewel in President Tappan's vision of U-M as a premier research university.

## 1856

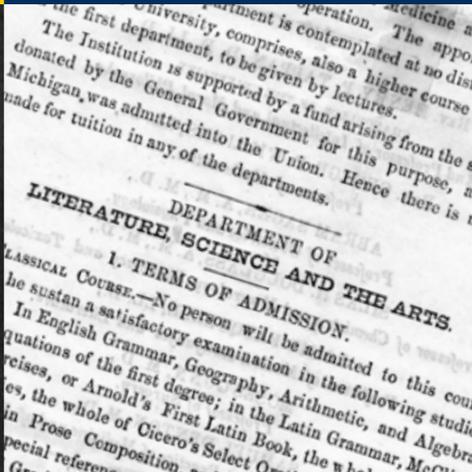
The University of Michigan becomes the first school with its own chemistry laboratory.

## 1857

History begins to be taught as a separate subject from ancient languages and philosophy with the teaching of Professor Andrew Dickson White.

## 1870

Madelon Louisa Stockwell is the first woman admitted to the University. She graduates in 1872 with a degree in literature.



## 1872

Saiske Tagai of Japan enrolls in LSA to study literature, becoming the University's first Asian student.

## 1872

The name "Department of Literature, Science and the Arts" is first used in the minutes of the January Regents meeting.

## 1875

Henry S. Frieze is appointed the first dean of LSA.

## 1876

Mary Henrietta Graham is the first known African American woman admitted to the University, earning her degree in literature in 1880.



## 1877

Louisa Reed Stowell, the first female instructor at U-M, starts her 12-year career teaching botany. She was not considered part of the faculty at the time.

## 1880

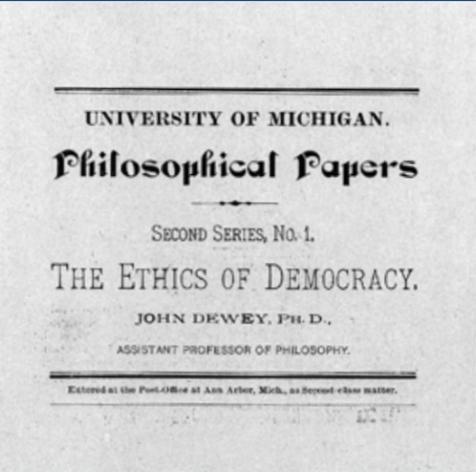
The Department of Economics is established, although classes in economics had been taught from the University's founding.

## 1881

The Department of Philosophy becomes its own unit, separating itself from the study of theology.

## 1882

Alumna and soon-to-be president of Wellesley College Alice Freeman becomes the first woman to earn an honorary degree, a Ph.D.



## 1884

Philosopher and psychologist John Dewey becomes an instructor in LSA. His concept of "functional" psychology had a huge impact in his field.

## 1885

Jude Rose Colby earns a doctorate in literature to become the first woman to earn a non-honorary Ph.D. at U-M.

## 1887

Influential economist Henry Carter Adams joins the Department of Economics.

## 1887

The Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures are founded.



## 1890

The Department of Physics is established. Courses in physics were first taught in 1843.

## 1891

The Department of Literature, Science, and the Arts establishes its Graduate Department.

## 1894

The Literary Class of 1894 is the first to wear academic gowns at a U-M commencement.

## 1895

Professor of English Louis A. Strauss becomes the first Jewish member of the faculty, eventually becoming chair of the department in 1920.



## 1897

Fanny Elizabeth Langdon becomes the first woman instructor in the sciences, teaching zoology and botany until her death in 1899.

## 1898

The existence of "organic free radicals" is discovered by Chemistry Professor Moses Gomberg.

## 1910

The Department of Political Science is founded, although courses were first taught in 1852.

## 1911

The Department of Fine Arts is established.



## 1913

The Museum of Zoology becomes an independent unit headed by Alexander Ruthven.



## 1914

Susan Benedict becomes the first woman U-M Ph.D. in mathematics.



## 1915

The Committee on Nomenclature proposes and the Regents approve "College of Literature, Science, and the Arts" as the official name of LSA.



## 1915

The departments of Geography and Geology are established. They became individual units in 1923, with geography dissolving in 1982.



## 1918

Elmer Samuel Imes becomes the first African American U-M physics Ph.D. and only the second in the United States.



## 1921

Robert Frost joins the faculty as one of the first "poets in residence" in the nation.



## 1921

The Department of Rhetoric and Journalism is established, later partially merging with the Department of English Language and Literature in 1930.



## 1928

The Department of Anthropology is founded.



## 1929

A summer symposium on nuclear physics is held on campus, the first of 12 that would attract top physicists such as J. Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi.



## 1929

Literature graduate Esther Marsh Cram (A.B. 1898) becomes the first woman regent of the University.



## 1929

The Department of Psychology separates from the Department of Philosophy.



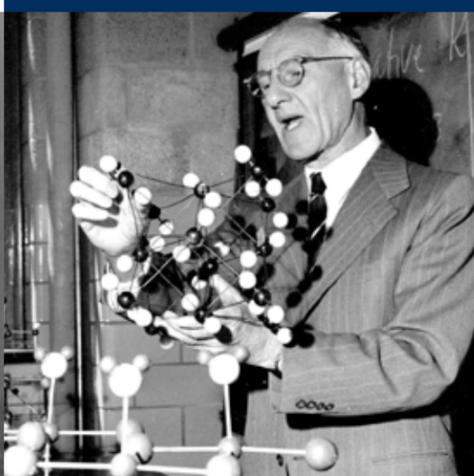
## 1930

The Hopwood Awards for creative writing, playwriting, and poetry are given out for the first time.



## 1933

Mehmet Aga-Oglu joins the faculty as the first ever chair in the history of Islamic art. Aga-Oglu would teach at U-M as a fellow and then a professor.



## 1936

Physical Chemistry Professor Kasimir Fajans joins the faculty at U-M after fleeing Nazi persecution in Germany.



## 1938

Legendary playwright Arthur Miller graduates from U-M with an A.B. in literature.



## 1938

Botany Professor Elzada Clover becomes the first woman to successfully navigate the Colorado River.



**1939**  
Journalist Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes* fame graduates from U-M with an A.B.

**1940**  
Doctoral student in chemistry Alfred L. Wilds synthesizes equilenin, the first time a human sex hormone is synthetically produced.

**1941**  
The great English poet W.H. Auden teaches English at U-M for one year.

**1943**  
Future Nobel laureate Jerome Karle earns his Ph.D. in chemistry.

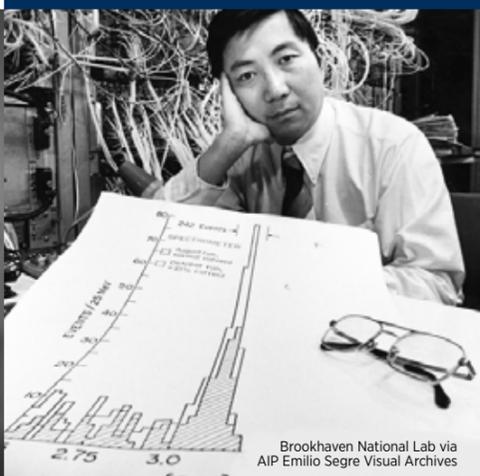


**1947**  
Valentine Davies (A.B. '36) wins the Academy Award for Best Story for the film *Miracle on 34th Street*.

**1948**  
Orval "Val" Johnson becomes the first African American president of the LSA senior class.

**1948**  
The Division of Biological Sciences is formed, separating from the departments of Botany and Zoology.

**1949**  
Marjorie Lee Browne earns her Ph.D. in mathematics, the first African American woman to earn one at Michigan and one of the first in the country.

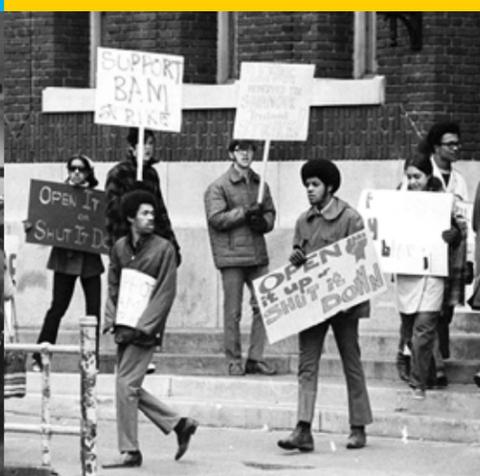
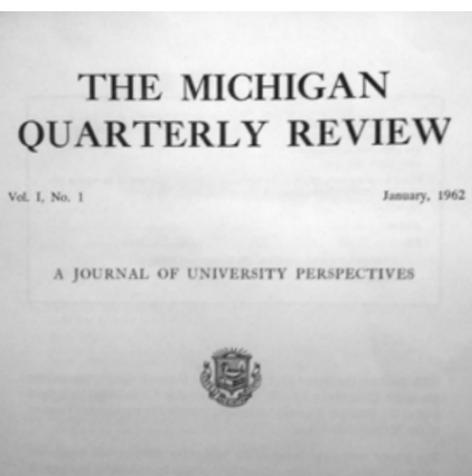


**1954**  
Professor Donald Glaser invents his "Bubble Chamber," a way to observe subatomic particles. He would later win the Nobel Prize in Physics for the invention.

**1954**  
Zoology alum Thomas H. Weller wins the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work on growing poliomyelitis viruses in a lab setting.

**1955**  
Actor James Earl Jones graduates from U-M with a degree in English literature.

**1959**  
Samuel C.C. Ting earns a bachelor's in both physics and mathematics. After earning a U-M doctorate, he shares a Nobel Prize in Physics for his contribution to the discovery of a subatomic particle.



**1962**  
*The Michigan Quarterly Review*, U-M's literary magazine, makes its debut.

**1963**  
The Department of Linguistics is established.

**1967**  
The Residential College is established.

**1968**  
The Black Student Union takes possession of the LSA Building as part of a protest demanding increased minority enrollment and support services for minority students.



## 1969

H. David Politzer receives his B.S. in physics. He would later share a Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on the mechanics of the strong nuclear force.



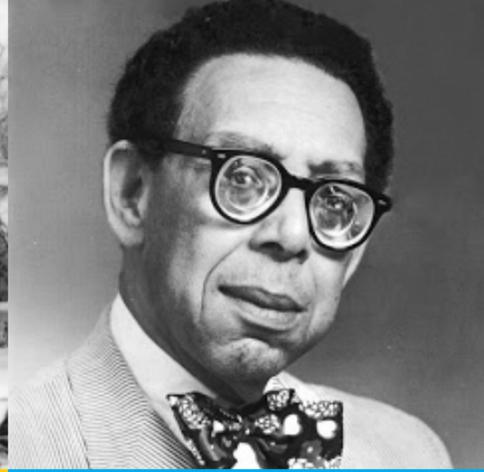
## 1972

Willie Hobbs Moore becomes the first African American woman in the nation to earn a Ph.D. in physics.



## 1973

The Executive Committee of LSA approves the proposal for a Women's Studies Program. Five courses are offered in the following fall semester.



## 1975

Hopwood Award winner and faculty member Robert Hayden becomes the first African American to serve as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, known today as U.S. Poet Laureate.



## 1978

Professor of microbiology and immunology Albert H. Wheeler becomes the first African American to be granted tenure at U-M.



## 1986

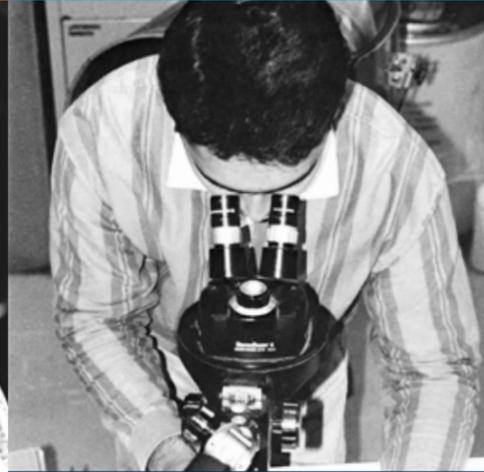
Stanley Cohen (Ph.D. '86) wins the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for his discovery of epidermal growth factor.

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## 1987

Joseph Brodsky, member of the faculty and future poet laureate of the United States, wins the Nobel Prize in Literature for his poetry.



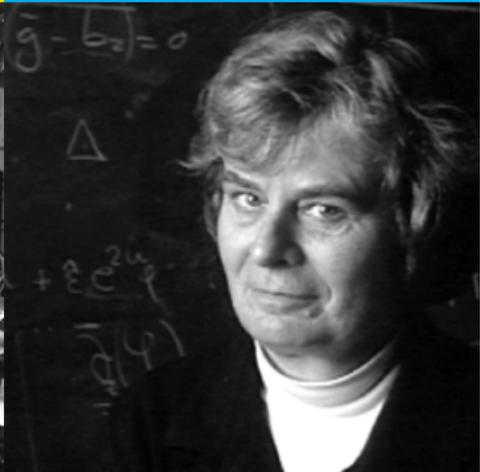
## 1988

The Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program is founded, allowing students in LSA to participate in high-level research during their undergraduate years.



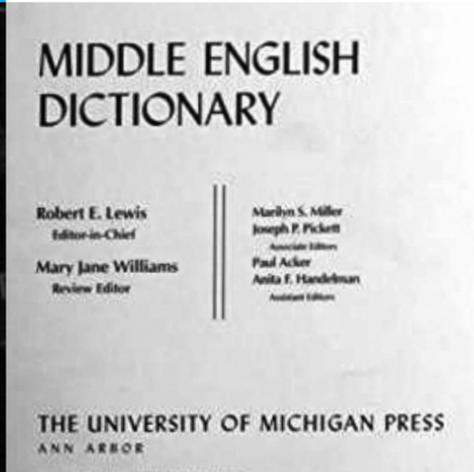
## 1996

The 1996 Nobel Prize in Physics goes to Richard E. Smalley (B.S. '65) for his discovery of the carbon arrangement buckminsterfullerene, or "bucky-balls."



## 2000

The National Medal of Science goes to alumna and mathematician Karen K. Uhlenbeck (A.B. '64).



## 2001

*The Middle English Dictionary*, a 15,000 page, 75-year project, is completed by U-M researchers.



## 2010

LSA junior Chris Armstrong becomes the first openly gay president of U-M's student government.



## 2013

Robert "Bob" Shiller (A.B. '67) wins the Nobel Prize in Economics.



## 2014

Political science Professor Robert Axelrod is awarded the National Medal of Science by President Barack Obama.



## 2016

LSA physicists help detect gravitational waves for the first time, a discovery that serves to confirm a major prediction of Albert Einstein's 1915 general theory of relativity.



## 2017

The University of Michigan celebrates its 200th birthday with a year of bicentennial-themed events, symposia, special guests, and more.