



## Judith Berling '67 • Distinguished Achievement

Judith Berling, a scholar in Chinese and comparative religions, is a pioneer in interreligious education.

Currently a professor of Chinese and comparative religions at Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California, Berling previously was dean and vice president of GTU from 1987–1996. Prior to that assignment, Berling was an assistant and associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University (1975–1987). In addition, Berling served as Director of Incarnating Globalization, a project of the Association of Theological Schools, from 1996–2000.

A Carleton religion major who graduated Phi Beta Kappa, *magna cum laude*, and as a member of Mortar Board, Berling earned an MPhil (1974) and a PhD (1976) at Columbia University. She received several fellowships and grants over the years, most notably a Henry Luce III Fellowship for Theology on two occasions (1991–92 and 2001–02).

Among her many honors are the Herman Bachman Lieber Distinguished Teaching Award at Indiana University in 1986, the Sarlo Excellence in Teaching

Award at GTU in 2003, the Ray L. Hart Service Award from the American Academy of Religion in 2005, and her selection as the GTU Distinguished Faculty Lecturer in 2000.

Berling was president of the American Academy of Religion from 1990–1991 and is a past president of the American Society for the Study of Religions (2002–2005). She is a past trustee and vice chair of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, a founding co-editor of *Teaching Theology and Religion*, and a member of the Association of Theological Schools Commission on Accreditation (1988–1994, chair in 1994).

Berling has supervised more than 20 doctoral students in religious studies and is in demand as a speaker and consultant in North America, Asia, and Europe. She has written several books; her textbook, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds*, remains a key text as schools prepare students for work in a religiously plural society.

Berling's partner of 28 years, Rhoda Bunnell, died in 2008. Berling continues to live in Berkeley, California.