PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Social Work

Sandra L. Momper, assistant professor of social work, School of Social Work, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

Academic Degrees:
Ph.D. 2005 University of Pittsburgh, Social Work
M.S.W. 1991 University of Pittsburgh, Social Work
B.S. 1973 University of Slippery Rock, Slippery Rock, PA, Sociology/Social Work

Professional Record:
2009-Present  Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, School of Social Work
2007-2009  Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, University of Michigan Substance Abuse Research Center

Summary of Evaluation
Teaching: Professor Momper has taught a total of seven courses between fall 2008 and winter 2013. As a result of federal funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) training grant, Professor Momper created and taught SW 790, a one-credit mini-course entitled Advanced Topics in Interpersonal Practice: Strengthening Engagement and Retention Skills in Work with High-Need Youth, in spring/summer 2013. This course is intended to advance student knowledge and understanding of culturally appropriate social work practice as it relates to underserved and marginalized populations in the US. She has mentored four MSW graduates who are now employees of American Indian Health and Family Services. Overall, evaluations for her course and teaching quality are favorable, with corresponding average scores of 3.85 and 4.57.

Professor Momper’s record clearly demonstrates a deep commitment to mentoring graduate and undergraduate students. In addition to course instruction, Professor Momper has been an instructor for eight special or independent studies with students at both master’s and doctoral levels. She also has supervised two undergraduate students through U-M’s Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), and one student through the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (MICHR) Summer Immersion Program. She has been a member of four doctoral preliminary examination committees and four dissertation committees. Furthermore, she has a substantial track record of publishing with both masters and doctoral students. Her scholarship includes at least 13 published manuscripts with doctoral and master’s-level students.

Service: Professor Momper has served on numerous SSW and university-wide committees, many having to do with assuring cultural and gender equity and improving the recruitment of students from underrepresented groups into the SSW PhD and MSW programs. She also is founder, organizer, and faculty mentor for the Interdisciplinary Research with Native Peoples Workgroup within the Curtis Research Center.

At the university level, Professor Momper’s contributions include serving as grant reviewer for MICHR, student project reviewer for UROP, and contributor to the development of the CBPR component of the university’s eResearch system. She has been an active participant in UM student activities, including the Native American Student Association.
Beyond the university, her community service is inextricably linked to her scholarship. As an active member of the American Indian Health and Family Services, Inc. (AIHFS), much of Professor Momper's service has been to identify and secure grant funding for the development, expansion and assessment of innovative services. Through procurement of funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), her involvement in state and local American Indian groups (American Indian Health and Family Services of SE MI), and subsequent conversations with policy makers, Professor Momper has developed and advocated for new approaches to enhanced health, mental health, and behavioral health services for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) peoples. As a result of her efforts, Professor Momper is often invited to consult and provide feedback on the development of culturally appropriate administrative protocols and forms, projects, and grant proposals of relevance to AI/AN populations.

Research: Professor Momper's work focuses on the delivery and evaluation of health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment services to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations in the United States. Her initial research examined gambling and substance abuse as co-occurring disorders among AI/AN populations, and included a systematic evaluation of culturally appropriate interventions to address these challenges. Her findings highlighted the serious health and mental health risks to AI/AN adolescents, which led her into investigations of suicide risk and culturally appropriate prevention efforts among these populations. Working collaboratively with AI/AN groups at local, state, and national levels, Professor Momper’s most recent work has involved evaluation of integrated health services for AI/ANs.

Professor Momper’s research trajectory is notable in that the nature of her research requires extensive time and effort to establish collaborative relationships and trust among a population of people whose experience has made them suspicious of the motivations and conclusions of academic researchers. She has spent years collaborating with and supporting local AI/AN groups in addressing health and mental health care needs and is also recognized for being an AI who has dedicated herself to “giving back” to the community from which she came. Professor Momper’s scholarship reflects a commitment to excellent Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR).

Professor Momper’s body of scholarship demonstrates a successful and evolving track for securing external research funding, as she has been the primary academic contributor on multiple and varied federal and foundation support projects. The awards to the AI/AN agencies with which Professor Momper works would not have been funded without her contributions as an expert in social and behavioral science.

Professor Momper’s scholarly record, as well as her success in securing ever larger grant awards from foundations and federal agencies, attest to the recognition by reviewers of the high quality of her research methods and her ability to establish credibility and navigate the challenges of writing and publishing collaboratively, which is particularly challenging when navigating local politics and approvals from multiple and various stakeholders within and across various AI/AN groups. This success has led to Professor Momper becoming a widely recognized expert in the field of culturally appropriate health, mental health, and behavioral health services for AI/ANs.

Professor Momper has disseminated her work through multiple and varied venues and across both academic and AI/AN communities in which she was recognized for her contributions. Her publication record includes first-authored articles appearing in top-tier social work and public health journals such as Social Work, Social Work Research, and the American Journal of Public Health.
Overall, Professor Momper has played a substantial role in securing funding and carrying out important scholarship with a highly marginalized and underserved population. She has been very successful in developing, over the years, a large-scale community-based research infrastructure with a continuing stream of federal dollars. She also has a University of Michigan campus presence and impact with regard to positioning UM units in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies serving AI/ANs.

Recent and Significant Publications:


External Reviewers:
Reviewer A: “I believe that Professor Momper would be successful were she to seek this promotion at my institution. In fact, I believe that she would be successful at pretty much any institution in their social work programs.”

Reviewer B: “Dr. Momper is highly involved in critical areas of concern for American Indian communities...Given the body of Dr. Momper’s published work, the funding she has received, and her involvement with and recognition from local and federal agencies, I feel confident she would be successful in seeking promotion to associate professor with tenure at my institution.”

Reviewer C: “Dr. Momper is a bright and innovative scholar with an impressive professional trajectory. Her research questions are critical to the field of social work and other health-related professions. Her quality scholarship, methodological work, teaching, and exceptional community and university service would make her an excellent candidate for tenure at my institution.”
Reviewer D: "Dr. Momper has developed a solid body of research that is sensitive and responsive to a historically disadvantaged community. She has achieved national recognition for these efforts, and it appears that she is on a trajectory to grow this work even further. For these reasons, I hope you consider her promotion very favorably."

Reviewer E: "The descriptive study findings Dr. Momper has identified are of importance for those interested in developing more effective substance use disorder (SUD) interventions to prevent or reduce substance use/dependence in the Native American Indian and in gambling communities and are therefore valuable studies for Social Work... Her scholarly productivity when reviewing her total record of publications, conferences and grants clearly puts her at the top among tenure-track scholars. Her service record is unique and exceeds expectations for tenure."

Reviewer F: "The candidate’s corpus is highly relevant and is making a substantial contribution to the existing knowledge in the area of American Indian health disparity research. There is great potential for the development of future research leading to the production of evidence-based interventions developed with and for American Indian communities."

Reviewer G: "My recommendation to you and your Committee is positive with my highest enthusiasm. She is hard working, community based, well organized, team focused and clearly helping to move the treatment and prevention research agenda in Native communities. She can provide a beacon for other researchers both Native and others to reach out and work in this needed area. In these times of seeking diversity across college campuses, she could be a great asset in developing more Native faculty to work in academic endeavors."

Reviewer H: "She has a successful record of active engagement in building capacity within tribal communities to improve services, evaluate programs, and participate in research – and this is an important agenda that will advance the field and help address the significant health disparities facing this vulnerable population."

Summary of Recommendation: Given the innovative and effective nature of her research, her excellent mentoring and educational work with diverse students, her innovative teaching, and her service in the American Indian Community, I support the recommendations of our Tenure and Promotion and Executive Committees in recommending Assistant Professor Sandra L. Momper for promotion to the rank of associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

Laura Lein
Katherine Reebel Collegiate Professor of Social Work, Professor of Anthropology
and Dean, School of Social Work

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