

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Ying Fan, assistant professor of economics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of economics, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2009	Yale University
M.Phil.	2006	Yale University
M.A.	2005	Yale University
M.A.	2003	Peking University
B.A./B.S.	2001	Wuhan University

Professional Record:

2009 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Michigan
2012 – 2013	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Harvard University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Fan is a serious and dedicated teacher. She has developed and taught two undergraduate courses in her area of specialization and one graduate course. She thinks long and hard about how to improve her courses and how to reach students with varying interests and skills. Professor Fan identifies four principals that guide her in preparing and teaching her courses: 1) understanding the needs of her students; 2) the value of repetition; 3) providing meaningful motivation; and 4) relating abstract concepts to personal real-life experiences. Student comments suggest they appreciate her attention to those principals. As a result, student ratings of her courses are consistently above 4.0 in response to “excellent course” and “excellent teacher” questions. Professor Fan has served on four doctoral committees, and she is currently advising six doctoral students, serving as the chair for one and co-chair for two others.

Research – Professor Fan is an expert in industrial organization (IO), the study of the strategic behavior of firms in less-than-competitive markets. She is well-known for her innovative empirical research on policy analysis in the context of markets where firms choose the set and types of products that they offer. Her work in this area has developed new and more general structural models as compared to the existing literature. Professor Fan’s study of the impact of mergers in the newspaper market is also an important contribution. Traditional merger analysis focused only on pricing decisions, holding product qualities constant. In contrast, Professor Fan’s models allow firms to choose product qualities (or other characteristics) in a way consistent with profit maximization. Thus, her models are more general and allow richer analysis bringing substantive methodological challenges. In response, she develops new methodological ideas and techniques to address this problem. Based on her path-breaking contributions, Professor Fan has achieved a laudable record of publishing IO articles in the top economics journals.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Financial constraints and moral hazard: The case of franchising,” with K.-U. Kühn and F. Lafontaine, *Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.

“Reputation premium and reputation management: Evidence from the largest e-commerce platform in China,” with J. Ju and M. Xiao, *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, 46, 2016, pp. 63-76.

“Competition and subsidies in the deregulated U.S. local telephone industry,” with M. Xiao, *RAND Journal of Economics*, 46(4), 2015, pp. 751-76.

“Ownership consolidation and product characteristics: A study of the US daily newspaper market,” *American Economic Review*, 103(5), 2013, pp. 1598-1628.

Service – Professor Fan has a strong service record for her rank. She has served multiple times on the Ph.D. Admissions Committee and the Master’s in Applied Economics Program Committee. She has been elected to be an alternate to the departmental Executive Committee. She is also a co-organizer of the Industrial Organization seminar and has been a faculty advisor for the Knight-Wallace fellowship program.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“It is easy to publish in economics, but hard to publish at the level that Ying has published. ... The quality of Ying’s work is the metric that matters, and the quality is comparable to the very best researchers [in her cohort] in Industrial organization. The number of high quality papers that Ying have [sic] produced is exactly what I would expect from an Assistant Professor on track to get tenure at a peer institution.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Ying is one of the best tenure-ready scholars [in her cohort] in empirical IO. I do not believe that Michigan is likely hire a stronger empirical IO economist in the foreseeable future...”

Reviewer (C)

“Ying has developed a very coherent research program in empirical industrial organization, focusing on firm decisions regarding product characteristics, pricing, and entry. Her research program is right in the mainstream of current IO research topics and methods. ... She has published two papers in the top general interest journals...which requires not only an excellent methodological approach but a research question that is interesting to economists beyond the field of industrial organization. ...she has two published two papers in the primary field journals in industrial organization... I think she has established an impressive research record.”

Reviewer (D)

“Writing a few great papers is a much better way to establish a reputation than writing more mid-quality papers. This is true in IO, and in the field of Economics more generally. Obtaining a top-5 publication is particularly desirable, and Professor Fan has two... This is a great accomplishment... ..I would strongly support tenure at [my institution] for Professor Fan and I believe that she would get it.”

Reviewer (E)

“Ying is a low-quantity, high-quality scholar. ...*all* her papers are good. ...there are no weak links on her vita (and there are few people for whom I would say that). ... Scholars of Ying’s intellect, technical competence and commitment to excellence are rare.”

Reviewer (F)

“...I think the quality of Ying’s work to be excellent, particularly in the care with which she conducts empirical analyses. I think the quantity to be very good... On the balance of the evidence, I think Ying clearly merits a promotion to the position of associate professor with tenure at the University of Michigan. Her clear strength is her ability to do careful empirical work on questions of methodological and policy interest within empirical IO.”

Reviewer (G)

“...Ying is a productive and very capable member of the field that is doing high quality and innovative work. ...she is very good, and I think that promoting her would be a natural decision. I would certainly support such a decision.”

Reviewer (H)

“She is an innovative researcher who works on core questions in industrial organization (IO). She has a strong publication record—two top publications, two field journal papers, and a very nice working paper—that compares well with other IO scholars in her broad cohort. ... The hallmarks of Ying’s work are clear economic thinking, technical sophistication, and a laser-focus on real-world policy issues.”

Reviewer (I)

“...[Ying] is a great candidate for tenure at your very distinguished department. ... Ying’s portfolio is quite strong when compared to other empirical IO scholars who have been given tenure recently.”

Summary Recommendation:

Professor Fan has established a national reputation in her field. She is also an excellent teacher and mentor, and has a strong service record. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Ying Fan be promoted to the rank to associate professor of economics, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Andrew D. Martin, Dean
Professor of Political Science and Statistics
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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