

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

Nicholas C. Henriksen, assistant professor of Romance languages and literatures, and assistant professor of linguistics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of Spanish, with tenure, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, and associate professor of linguistics, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2010	Indiana University
M.A.	2006	Indiana University
B.A.	2003	Rutgers University

Professional Record:

2015 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan
2012 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
2011 – 2012	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Alabama, Birmingham
2010 – 2012	Assistant Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Henriksen is a highly respected instructor in the Spanish undergraduate program, who teaches his courses with an interdisciplinary approach. He has demonstrated teaching excellence in a variety of undergraduate courses and a strong commitment to the mentoring of undergraduate students through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities program. Indeed, Professor Henriksen’s great impact on undergraduate education is due to his pedagogical expertise, passion for teaching, and continued dedication and involvement with his students. He is an extraordinary mentor for undergraduate students interested in linguistics and, particularly, in Spanish linguistics. He also has a high level of commitment to graduate students and the teaching of Spanish linguistics. Although there is no doctoral program in linguistics in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, he has attracted graduate students from the Department of Linguistics and is currently serving on one Ph.D. dissertation committee.

Research – Professor Henriksen’s field is laboratory phonology with particular emphasis on the relation between cognitive representation and the physical instantiation of language via the analysis of prosodic units. His scholarship demonstrates an impressive ability to identify experimental methods that can distinguish between physical instantiation and prosodic variation in the production of speech. He has worked primarily on Spanish linguistics, with a particular focus on intonational patterns—which have historically been understudied—and on production and perception of phonological variation, including both vowels and consonants. Professor Henriksen has contributed new insights on linguistic and non-linguistic factors related to variation, including gender, speaking style, heritage status, and socio-economic class, which are significant for the field of phonology in general. His findings, in other words, transcend the field of Spanish linguistics, and his external letters of evaluation reflect Professor Henriksen’s ability to establish his scholarship in both laboratory phonology and Spanish linguistics simultaneously.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Patterns of vowel laxing and harmony in Iberian Spanish: data from production and perception,”
Journal of Phonetics, 63, 2017, pp. 106–126.

“Investigating the nature of the left periphery in Peninsular Spanish wh-question intonation,”
Phonetica, 73(1), 2016, pp. 1–32.

Intonational Grammar in Ibero-Romance: Approaches Across Linguistic Subfields, co-edited with
M. Armstrong and M. d. M. Vanrell, John Benjamins, 2016.

“Acoustic analysis of the rhotic contrast in Chicagoland Spanish: An intergenerational study,”
Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism, 5(3), 2015, pp. 285–321.

Service – Professor Henriksen has a solid record of service. He has served on the Department of Romance Literatures and Languages Executive Committee and as an undergraduate Spanish advisor; he has also served several terms as a member of the Spanish Curriculum Committee and the Lecturer Review Committee. Professor Henriksen has been active in contributing to the intellectual life of the department by bringing prominent scholars to the university.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Dr. Henriksen is an established expert in Spanish phonology, specifically the intonational phonology of peninsular varieties of Spanish. He has demonstrated that he is an expert in the field through his impressive record of scholarship in the form of journal articles, an edited volume, conference, presentations, and invited lectures.”

Reviewer (B)

“In my estimate Nick is among the top researchers in the field of Spanish linguistics. He has great breadth, has published extensively, is well-cited for someone just 7 years from graduation, and has a number of invited talks under his belt. In addition, he now has a commissioned paper (to appear in the *Manual to Romance Phonetics and Phonology*), the type of paper typically requested of someone who is known to be a respected expert on the topic. Overall, this is the profile of a tenured faculty member.”

Reviewer (C)

“In my view, Dr. Henriksen is currently one of the leading scholars in the field of Hispanic Linguistics, and in particular, Spanish phonetics and phonology. His numerous publications have made significant contributions to the field and have furthered our understanding of the nature of intonational contours and consonantal variation in various Peninsular Spanish dialects, as well as prosodic timing in language contact situations between Spanish and Afrikaans in Argentina and between Spanish and Yagua in Amazonian Peru. I believe that the breadth and depth of Dr. Henriksen’s research output places him in the highest standing in relation to not only his academic peers but also other more senior linguists who have already been working in the field for some time.”

Reviewer (D)

“Since receiving his Ph.D. in 2010, Dr. Henriksen has distinguished himself as one of the foremost scholars in Spanish Linguistics and, more generally, the phonetics-phonology interface through his enlightening and thoughtful research on a broad range of topics, including intonation, lenition, vowel harmony, rhotic production, heritage linguistics, language contact, sociolinguistics, and variation.”

Reviewer (E)

“One paper that I would single out as particularly important is ‘Patterns of vowel laxing and harmony in Iberian Spanish...’ This paper was published in 2017 in *Journal of Phonetics*, which is the leading journal in the field of phonetics and one of the most highly ranked and most competitive venues in the larger field of linguistics as a whole. I have already added this paper to my syllabus for my graduate Spanish Phonology class since it represents a considerable advance with respect to all previous work on the topic of Eastern Andalusian vowel harmony, a phenomenon that has attracted the interest of linguists for many decades.”

Reviewer (F)

“Prof. Henriksen seems to have made a fine start on a research career. He has a broad ongoing research program, and he is publishing in respected journals and presenting at competitive conferences. He is productive as a sole investigator, but he also collaborates with others.”

Reviewer (G)

“Prof. Henriksen’s overall standing in the discipline of prosody is very high. He is among the top researchers in the world in Spanish phonetics and phonology. The results of his experiments have been published in the most prestigious journals in the field. Importantly, he is actively participating in key international workshops and meetings on phonetics and phonology and has been invited to give talks at several international events and institutions.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Henriksen is a leading expert in his fields of laboratory phonology and Spanish linguistics with an international reputation. He is also a highly respected teacher and outstanding mentor, especially to undergraduate students, as well as a generous, professional, and insightful colleague in the Departments of Romance Languages and Literatures and Linguistics. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Sciences, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Nicholas C. Henriksen be promoted to the rank of associate professor of Spanish, with tenure, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, and associate professor of linguistics, without tenure, College of Literatures, 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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