

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

Tung-Hui Hu, assistant professor of English language and literature, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of English language and literature, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2009	University of California at Berkeley
M.F.A.	2003	University of Michigan
A.B.	1998	Princeton University

Professional Record:

2013 – 2014	Visiting Scholar, Stanford Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
2012 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Michigan
2009 – 2012	Assistant Professor and Postdoctoral Scholar (non-tenure-track), Michigan Society of Fellows, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – During his time at Michigan, Professor Hu has distinguished himself as an accomplished instructor. Indeed, in large part because of his uniquely capacious scholarly work, he has offered an unusual range of teaching contributions. Since 2012, he has taught nine undergraduate courses that range from electronic literature and digital culture seminars to poetry and creative writing workshops. He has also taught three graduate classes, which boast similar disciplinary breadth. Students across all courses praise Professor Hu for his ability to lead discussion, his clarity in describing computational subject matter, and his deeply informed approach to composing experimental texts. He spoke at the 2015 Provost’s Seminar on Teaching, and he received the 2017 Henry Russel Award for “exceptional scholarship and conspicuous ability as a teacher.” He has also contributed to the development of the new minor in digital studies.

Research – Professor Hu is both a poet and a scholar of digital and media studies. His work in both domains is concerned with the workings of figural language in shaping our understandings of experience. His widely reviewed scholarly monograph, A Prehistory of the Cloud, considers cloud computing in context of the history of the material technologies that link networks, from Victorian plumbing, to railway lines, to fiber optic cables. Professor Hu explores the complex material histories of what has become one of the most ubiquitous metaphors of our digital age, tracing its entanglement with political ideology, cultural fantasy, and new conceptions of personhood. Professor Hu’s work has been foundational to the development of “the infrastructural turn” in media studies. His published poetry, and especially the most recent collection, Greenhouses, Lighthouses, skillfully deploys metaphor as a formal device to investigate themes of vision, endurance, and social power. All of his writing is characterized by extraordinary range, imagination, and critical insight, and has been acclaimed accordingly.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Black boxes and green lights: media, infrastructure, and the future at any cost,” *ELN*, 44(1), 2017, pp. 81-88.

A Prehistory of the Cloud, MIT Press, 2015.

“Truckstops on the information superhighway: ant farm, SRI, and the cloud,” *Media-N: Journal of the New Media Caucus*, 10(1), 2014.

Greenhouses, Lighthouses, Copper Canyon Press, 2013.

Service – In the Department of English Language and Literature, Professor Hu has served on the Undergraduate Creative Writing Committee, the Salary and Awards Committee, the Hopwood Awards Committee, the Executive Committee, as well as the MFA Admissions Committee. As a member of the Digital Studies Advisory Board in American Culture, he helped to build a successful undergraduate minor and a new graduate certificate in Digital Studies. He has also served for four years as a faculty sponsor for the active Digital Studies Rackham Inter-disciplinary Workshop.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Having examined the record of research and scholarship achieved by Professor Hu, I can state that as evidenced by his critically acclaimed publications and the prestige of the awards and honors granted him including a 2015 NEA Fellowship in Poetry, he has amassed a national and international reputation in the field of English and Creative Writing that is commensurate with the rank of Associate Professor.”

Reviewer (B)

“His groundbreaking book, A Prehistory of the Cloud, published by the leading press in the field (MIT) and reviewed in prestigious journals and newspapers, has already become a cornerstone of the field, assigned in graduate and undergraduate-level courses around the world.”

Reviewer (C)

“It is my conviction that the quantity and quality of his creative works *alone* (that is, without even considering his scholarly achievements) easily meet the highest standards for tenure and promotion.”

Reviewer (D)

“Tung-Hui Hu has assembled the strongest tenure file that I have reviewed. Reading his work has made for some of the most rewarding labor of the summer, and has left me feeling smarter about the unseen worlds of information and power in which we live. His scholarly writing exemplifies the best of what media studies can bring to an English department, while simultaneously highlighting just how important our own languages of ethics, politics, and theory should be to historians of technology.”

Reviewer (E)

“What you have here is a candidate who merits promotion and tenure for his 50% digital media studies work alone.”

Reviewer (F)

“Of the dozen or so successful tenure dossiers I have reviewed in the past seven years—most for Research I universities and top-tier liberal arts colleges—Hu’s is far and away the strongest. His international reputation is evinced not only by his many awards and residential fellowships, but also by the many commending (and entirely accurate) reviews of his book for publications with global audiences.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Through his scholarly, pedagogical, and service contributions, Professor Hu has established himself as an exemplary member of the college faculty, and one who seems certain to continue re-shaping his several fields, inspiring his students and readers, and contributing to new digital studies initiatives for many years to come. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Tung-Hui Hu be promoted to the rank of associate professor of English language and literature, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Martin', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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

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