

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

Stephanie D. Preston, associate professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2001	University of California, Berkeley
M.A.	1998	University of California, Berkeley
B.A.	1994	University of Virginia, Charlottesville

Professional Record:

2014	Visiting Faculty, Department of Psychology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2013 – present	Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Sustainability, University of Michigan
2012 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
2012 – present	Associate Faculty Member, Comprehensive Depression Center, University of Michigan
2005 – 2012	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
2001 – 2005	Post-doctoral Fellow, Neurology Clinic, College of Medicine, University of Iowa

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Preston has taught a variety of innovative, demanding, and engaging undergraduate and graduate courses. Specifically, she taught a 100-level first-year seminar that examines how psychological research can be utilized to increase prosocial behaviors that promote sustainability. The class focuses on real world issues, such as the use of wind power. A 400-level course that she taught was a popular seminar on altruism. At the graduate level, Professor Preston taught an especially valuable course on theory development. In this class, she worked very closely with every student to help them formulate a theory and show them how to write it up. Because students from across psychology took the class, Professor Preston had to become conversant in a diverse range of topics in order to guide the students effectively. Student evaluations of her courses have been excellent and have included comments with high praise. Professor Preston has a strong track record of informal teaching and mentoring. She has provided a high level of one-on-one mentoring with a large number of undergraduate students, and many have gone on to receive prestigious awards and have been accepted into excellent graduate programs around the country. Professor Preston has had four graduate students. The senior graduate students have gone onto a faculty associate position and a post-doctoral fellowship.

Research – Professor Preston's research seeks to answer important and interrelated questions concerning empathy, altruism, and resource decisions. These topics have been fundamental to human survival throughout history, and continue to be in present times and in the future. Within each topic area, Professor Preston has developed a sophisticated theoretical model incisively integrating empirical and theoretical work from multiple disciplines, including evolutionary biology, animal behavior, psychology, and neuroscience. Following the development of each theory, she has conducted empirical studies to test her ideas using clever and converging scientific methods. Professor Preston is recognized as a leading expert in these areas, as indicated by numerous invited

lectures, her recent invitation to contribute a perspective piece for the journal *Science*, and other appearances and mentions in public media. Her 2014 empirical paper, "Altruism in the wild," was selected by the American Psychological Association (APA) to appear in their press release series, *Particularly Exciting Experiments in Psychology*, a clear indication of the relevance of her work for real world phenomena.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- "Emotion and reward are dissociable from error during motor learning," with S. B Festini, et al., *Experimental Brain Research*, 234, 2016, pp. 1385-1394.
- "Stress leads to prosocial action in immediate need situations," with T. Buchanan, *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, 8(5), 2014, pp. 1-6, doi: 10.3389/fnbeh.2014.00005.
- "Altruism in the wild: When affiliative motives to help positive people overtake empathic motives to help the distressed," with D. J. Hauser and R. B Stansfield, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 143(3), 2014, pp. 1295-1305, doi: 10.1037/a0035464 (winner of the Brickman Award for most outstanding paper by a graduate student; featured in *Particularly Exciting Experiments in Psychology* by the APA (PeePs).
- "Examining the origins of altruism in offspring care," *Psychological Bulletin*, 139(6), 2013, pp. 1305-1341, doi: 10.1037/a0031755 (winner of the Social Affective Neuroscience Innovation award).

Service – Professor Preston has provided exceptional service to the university and to the broader research community. She has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental and sustainability issues and has served on many environmentally relevant committees, including the Executive Committee for the Graham Sustainability Institute, the provost's Committee for Environment and Sustainability, and the co-chair of President Schlissel's Committee on the Culture of Sustainability on campus. She has been an excellent citizen in the Department of Psychology where she served on the Executive Committee and has been a co-leader of the Decision Consortium. At the national level, she served as a reviewer for the National Science Foundation and the Templeton Foundation. She is currently on many editorial boards, including a new journal, *Nature Sustainability*, and has organized numerous high-profile symposia since tenure.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

"Stephanie's record to date is a stellar one. She has established herself internationally and continues to be impressively productive. The work she has in the pipeline sounds like it will be some of her best. I see nothing but further growth in her contribution and reputation."

Reviewer (B)

"...there is no doubt that Stephanie Preston has elevated herself to appropriate international prominence... She is ceaselessly productive, both at the level of generating new empirical work, and in review and opinion papers integrating that work. ...her nomination to APS [Association for Psychological Science] Fellow confirms that institutional regard. Her own award from the Society for Affective Neuroscience coupled with the award to her graduate student for linked research speaks both to her research creativity and to her mentorship."

Reviewer (C)

"Dr. Preston has found an effective strategy and framework that she has applied to tackling some fascinating and even counter-intuitive human behaviors. The behaviors she studies may seem somewhat disparate, but when examining her work as a whole, one sees the genius and power of her

strategy. The behaviors she studies don't share much on the surface, but the brain mechanisms driving them share millions of years of evolution and also share the fact that balancing multiple neural systems is what provided the solution to some really complicated adaptive problems.”

Reviewer (D)

“Dr. Preston's 2002 Behavioral and Brain Sciences paper with Frans de Waal, on [e]mpathy, is a classic. It had a big impact...on the thinking of the field of psychology. It's exciting that she has updated it with a new paper with de Waal...presenting new evidence supporting their Perception Action Model [PAM]. The PAM posits that attending to another person's...emotional or physiological state automatically activates a representation of the state, situation, and object, generating the associated autonomic and somatic responses.”

Reviewer (E)

“I consider Dr. Preston one the most brilliant minds in our field. ...[she] pushed her discipline forward and has made many groundbreaking theoretical contributions to our understanding of the biological regulation and evolution of human emotions and social processes. She is also a sophisticated and careful empirical scientist whose work has set new standards in social neuroscience research.”

Reviewer (F)

“Her peer-reviewed papers are published primarily in excellent outlets...with a focus on cross-disciplinary research, suggesting that she has excellent skills for working across diverse intellectual areas.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Preston has made important theoretical contributions through her research. She has an excellent track-record in teaching, mentoring and, service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Stephanie D. Preston be promoted to the rank of professor of psychology, 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

May 2018