

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Music

John S. Ellis, Assistant Professor of Music (Piano) School of Music, is recommended for promotion to Associate Professor of Music (Piano), with tenure, School of Music.

Academic Degrees:

D.M.A.	1991	Manhattan School of Music (MSM)
	1983-84	Deutsch als Fremdsprache (German as a foreign Language) Albert Ludwigs University Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany
M.M.	1983	Indiana University, School of Music (piano) with high distinction
B.M.	1981	SUNY Potsdam, Crane School of Music (piano) summa cum laude

Professional Record:

2000 –present	Assistant Professor; Director of Graduate Studies in Piano Pedagogy, University of Michigan, School of Music
1998	Director of Core Studies, Manhattan School of Music, Manhattan, Kansas

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: As a teacher and as the Director of Graduate Students in Piano Pedagogy, John has been energetic and innovative, rethinking the pedagogy program, revamping the class piano courses in response to the needs of the Music Education Department, and developing a coherent program of musically and intellectually engaged study in his own studio classes.

John is a leader in the pedagogy programs he directs highly motivated and accomplished students, who are enthusiastic about their work and studies. John's mentorship and teaching are producing tangible results as well, in that students completing their work with him are finding good employment in higher education (nationally and internationally) as well as joining the ranks of highly qualified independent teachers who impact music education at the most fundamental level.

Research:

John Ellis is a tremendous asset to the School of Music. He is a meticulous, patient, pleasant, creative and sensitive musician. John's professional responsibilities are unusually comprehensive. His research includes both his performance career and his scholarly writing. The program notes for the Liszt recital not only showed his depth of

study and understanding of Franz Liszt and Petrarch, but also his passion for the music and the poetry. His syllabi and statements of teaching, research, and performance show clarity, organization, and his mission to be an outstanding teacher.

Professor Ellis' imminent plans for research encompass projects that have purchase for the piano pedagogy curriculum. One, outgrowth of his articles on Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and *Ich grolle nicht*, will explore the relationship of musical semiotics to piano pedagogy with an end goal of producing a method for the teaching of interpretation. Ellis will continue this path of inquiry in analyses of two piano compositions by Schumann and one work by Arthur Cunningham, his best-known piano composition *Engrams* (169). John has also pursued talks with Professor Betty Anne Younker regarding prospects for publishing a journal of piano pedagogy research, a project that is rich with promise.

Service:

John Ellis has performed both within and beyond the University, which reflects the breadth of his teaching and research concerns. He has proven to be energetic and maintains a positive presence in the School. He has been a member of the School of Music's important undergraduate and graduate curriculum committee, served as a Resolution Officer for the University Office of Student Conflict Resolution, Alternate to the Senate Assembly. In addition, John is an active member of the larger community through his service as School of Music liaison with the Ann Arbor Society of Musical Arts Young Artists Competition and as former Board Member and State Chair of the Junior High Baldwin Piano Competition of the Michigan Music Teachers Association. John Ellis works diligently at the undergraduate and graduate level to improve the piano department's already excellent reputation and I feel that he will keep striving to do more for the School of Music throughout his career.

External Review:

Reviewer A

"He is a tremendous asset to the profession and has contributed significantly to the musical and the university community."

Reviewer B

"One can see from his writings alone why he is sought after as a performer, teacher, and lecturer by music organizations and colleagues. He has a great deal to contribute to the field, and he obviously delivers his presentations in a clear, concise, and communicative fashion."

Reviewer C

"...the University of Michigan has a faculty member who is an expert in the area of piano pedagogy and class piano instruction, who has conducted research in piano pedagogy as well as through his performances both on campus and off."

Reviewer D

“He seems profoundly dedicated to his teaching; to the improvement of his students as musicians and as people; to the effectiveness of the curriculum as it addresses students’ requirements; . . .”

Reviewer E

“I am most impressed b the articles that were enclosed in his Tenure Dossier. In addition to being extremely well written they show insightful analyses with clear thinking and intelligence.”

Reviewer F

“What is perhaps most striking as I consider the contents of this dossier and attempt to develop an overall perspective on it is the tremendous breadth and scope of Dr. Ellis’s work. Consistent with his own statements of purpose, he is a dedicated teacher whose work is firmly grounded in musical artistry, which in turn is informed by thorough knowledge of reportorial, historical, and theoretical concerns.”

Reviewer G

“If teachers are to be evaluated by the quality of the students they produce, then this is the venue in which Professor Ellis should receive the greatest credit.”

“As a colleague, John Ellis is a person of musical artistry, high principle, and integrity, with a strong intellect, outstanding organizational skills, and leadership potential. He has carved out an individual niche in the music profession, and is deeply respected by both students and colleagues. His ambitious work ethic is tempered by good humor, collegiality, and professionalism. From my vantage point, he is a valuable asset to the piano faculty at the University of Michigan.”

Reviewer H

“ . . . John Ellis has made substantial contributions in areas of scholarship and publication. He has a forthcoming project with the country’s largest music publisher, Alfred Publishing, the Alfred Etude Series. He has contributed to a wide variety of publications including *Musical Semiotics Revisited* (2003) and the forthcoming publication (submitted in 2000) by the International Conference on Musical Signification, among other impressive and scholarly works.”

“ . . . He garners highest praise and respect as he continues to perform and lecture nationally and internationally.”

Reviewer I

“Dr. Ellis’s scholarly credentials are very high (which, sadly, is not always the norm in our field) and his leadership in education is always based on the highest creative and artistic goals.”

Reviewer J

“ . . . John Ellis is a rare find in the world of piano studies. This is manifest by his joy in

performing a wide variety of interesting musical styles, and introducing his students to the myriad possibilities of investigating the broad spectrum of centuries of musical performance especially as it relates to piano studies.”

“John Ellis represents the best of the world of music, and has distinguished himself in ample areas for all considerations of the title Associate Professor with tenure.”

Reviewer K

“Dr. Ellis’s scholarly and artistic career is a fascinating and creative combination of his roles as a concert pianist, pedagogue and musicologist.”

“ . . . I consider him a highly competent pianist, who has the access to the authentic romantic tradition as well as modern music.”

Reviewer L

“ . . . I conclude that Professor Ellis is an outstanding pianist, teacher, and creative thinker.”

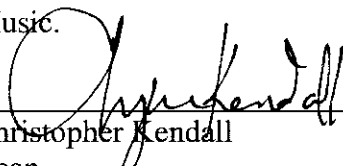
“He is a sensitive and thoughtful pianist and a fine teacher, evidenced by the course materials and the success of his students.”

Internal Review:

Professor John Ellis has made a positive impact at the department, school, and university level, and makes regular contributions to the profession in national and international settings. John is highly respected and supported by his colleagues in the School. Many have reiterated his fine qualities and have stressed the usefulness of the much needed reorganization of the piano pedagogy area. Ellis is enthusiastically supported by the faculty for promotion to associate professor.

Summary of Recommendation

John Ellis is a brilliant mind, a devoted teacher, and a creative administrator whose vision of pedagogy is remarkable. He is a thoroughly knowledgeable and accomplished performer and colleague. His national profile is already so strong among the professionals of the field. What distinguishes John is the level of his scholarly interest in music theory and analysis-specifically in questions of the production of meaning in music. John is exemplary in teaching, scholarship, performance, and service. It is with the unanimous support of the Executive Committee that I recommend John S. Ellis for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor of Music (Piano), with tenure, School of Music.



Christopher Kendall
Dean
School of Music

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