

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

Nojin Kwak, assistant professor of communication studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of communication studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

2001	Ph.D.	University of Wisconsin, Madison
1993	M.A.	University of Wisconsin, Madison
1990	B.A.	Sogang University

Professional Record:

2000 – present Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Studies, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluations:

Teaching – Professor Kwak is an excellent instructor who teaches courses at all levels from small elective seminars to large introductory classes. He consistently receives high praise from students for his enthusiastic and engaging teaching style, and many describe him as the best professor they have had at the College. Professor Kwak has been exemplary in involving Ph.D. candidates in collaborative research projects and advising students throughout the research process by showing them how to design research projects, submit conference paper proposals, and submit and then revise papers for publication.

Research – Professor Kwak’s broad area of research is in political communication, with a focus on how traditional and new media—television and internet, for example—influence people’s knowledge about the news, current affairs, and social issues. He is especially well-known for his work on the impact of the internet on civic engagement. His research has resulted in a national reputation that is among the very best in the field. He has published seventeen articles, a majority of which have appeared in extremely selective journals, and seven of his conference papers have received a “Top Three Faculty Paper” award through a peer reviewed pre-conference competition by one of the field’s major organizations.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- “Talking politics and engaging politics: An examination of the interactive relationships between structural features of political talk and discussion engagement,” with A. Williams, et al., *Communication Research*, 32, 2005, pp. 88-111.
- “To broadband or not to broadband: The relationship between high-speed internet and knowledge and civic participation,” with M. Skoric, et al., *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 48, 2004, pp. 421-445.
- “‘Connecting’ and ‘disconnecting’ with civic life: The effects of internet use on the production of social capital,” with D. Shah and R. L. Holbert, *Political Communication* 18, 2001, pp. 141-162.
- “Revisiting the knowledge gap hypotheses: Education, motivation, and media use,” *Communication Research*, 26, 1999, pp. 385-413.

Service – Professor Kwak has been an actively engaged member of the Department. In addition to serving on search committees and other ad hoc committees, he was faculty advisor for the internship and study abroad programs, which involved repeated meetings with students about their proposed off campus work and evaluations of their final research papers for the internship program. Nationally, he was a reviewer for six academic journals and served on the Executive Committee of a major professional organization in the field.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...Nojin has shown himself to be a leading political communication researcher [of his generation], widely cited and influential among his peers. ... He is both prolific and theoretically innovative. He has sustained a program of study that will likely prove to have a lasting effect on the field. He is clearly deserving of the promotion to associate professor with tenure...”

Reviewer (B)

“Professor Kwak’s record of research clearly indicates that he is an extraordinarily prolific scholar. ... In addition to the quantity of his work, the quality of Professor Kwak’s research is outstanding, as he has published in almost all of the top-tiered venues in the discipline...
...Professor Kwak is a stellar scholar by any measure...”

Reviewer (C)

“...[I] can say without hesitation that Kwak is in the top tier of his scholarly cohort. ... There is no question that he ranks among the best and brightest researchers of his cohort. ...the University of Michigan has been well served by the visibility and importance of Nojin Kwak’s scholarship.”

Reviewer (D)

“Dr. Kwak’s research record is, to say the least, impressive. I can’t remember reviewing anyone who has accomplished so much at such a high level in such a short time. ... At this point, a collection of ‘best of’ academic research on political communication would very likely include one or more of his award-winning papers or journal articles...”

Reviewer (E)

“...Professor Kwak has a very active research agenda... ..Kwak is a bright scholar [of his generation] with the potential to make significant scholarly contributions in political communication. ... He manifests in the publications and papers I read all the tools that suggest a very favorable academic future.”

Reviewer (F)

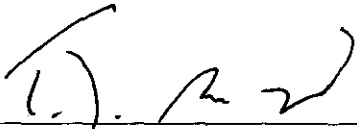
“...the quality and quantity of the research has been exceptional. To me, it is at the cutting edge of political communication research. ... The significant number of top-rated convention presentations...and the substantial number of publications in our very best journals, provides prima facie evidence of the significance of Professor Kwak’s research.”

Reviewer (G)

“While there are others in her PhD cohort whose quantity of publication exceeds hers, I can think of no one whose quality of work, Professor Santamarina does not match or surpass. Moreover, her work...has both depth and interdisciplinarity. ... She thoughtfully expands and sagely challenges ideas and interpretations in light of her original and different questions or methods. ... Her book has definitely taught me some things I did not know, spurred my own ideas and theories of application and comparability within and among various genre and disciplinary works...”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Santamarina’s publication record shows an exceptionally focused scholar who has clearly established herself as a leading authority in her areas of expertise. She is an excellent teacher and a good citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Xiomara A. Santamarina be promoted to the rank of associate professor of English language and literature, with tenure, and associate professor of Afroamerican and African studies, with tenure.



Terrence J. McDonald, Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

May 2006