

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

Kai Schnabel Cortina, assistant professor of psychology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2004	Free University Berlin
Ph.D.	1996	Free University Berlin
M.A.	1989	University of Marburg
B.A.	1986	University of Marburg

Professional Record:

2000 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
1998 – 1999	Visiting Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
1996 – 2000	Research Investigator, Max Planck Institute for Human Development

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Cortina has taught a broad range of courses – from large graduate level service courses to upper level undergraduate courses to more specialized graduate seminars. He plays a pivotal role in graduate education through his teaching of statistics for social science students. Because of his statistical expertise, he provides informal advice to students and faculty, and has served on many doctoral theses.

Research – Professor Cortina’s scholarship focuses on cross-cultural insights into education and the importance of balancing theoretical models and applied problems. Both are central to his research and teaching functions within the Department of Psychology. In his empirical work he has provided deep insights into the important variation in how societies organize one’s transition into adulthood. He has focused on cross-cultural comparisons that provide an understanding of both the universal features of the transition to adulthood and how different experiences can lead to different outcomes. He has also made important contributions to our understanding of how schools socialize children and adolescents. He has a very impressive number of publications appearing in solid journals in both developmental psychology and educational psychology. He has published in U.S. and international journals, and in English and German language journals. Most unusual for someone at his rank in psychology is the publication of three books – 2 edited volumes and a single-authored volume.

Recent & Significant Publications:

“Adolescents’ thoughts about parents’ jobs and their importance for adolescents’ future orientation: The moderating role of parental support.,” with N. Neblett, *Journal of Adolescence*, 29, 2006, pp. 795-811.

“Social network typologies and mental health among older adults,” with K. L. Fiori and T. Antonucci, *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 2006.

“Does interest matter? The relationship between academic interest and achievement in mathematics,” with O. Köller and J. Baumert, *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 2001, pp. 448-470.

Modeling Longitudinal and Multilevel Data: Practical Issues, Applied Approaches, and Specific Examples, co-edited with T. D. Little and J. Baumert, Mahwah, New Jersey: Erlbaum, 2000.

Service – Professor Cortina’s service record is exceptional. He has played a major role in three different programs: Developmental Psychology, the Combined Program in Education and Psychology, and the Joint Program in Social Work and Psychology. He has lent his expertise to members of the broader University community, serving as a reviewer for the Fulbright Awards, reviewing grants for the Office of the Vice President for Research, and participating in the interdisciplinary Quantitative Social Science Statistics and Methodology Seminar. Professor Cortina also provides extensive national and international service.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“There is no doubt in my mind that Dr. Cortina is an excellent candidate for promotion... His theoretical and methodological work is brilliant...he is committed to his research, and he is an outstanding academic teacher and advisor who can compete with the leading scholars of his generation in every respect.”

Reviewer (B)

“Kai Schnabel Cortina commands a wide range of topics... His analytic strengths reside in an excellent knowledge of statistical strategies of modeling time-dependent interactions between learning environments and individual motivation as well as in relating individual development to the wider issue of the life span.”

Reviewer (C)

“...the candidate is hard working and a good team player...”

Reviewer (D)

“Kai Schnabel Cortina’s studies are theoretically very well-founded and fall back on a spectrum of current theories... ..he is one of the few psychologists who have made themselves thoroughly familiar with sociological and pedagogical theories and approaches and knows how to use them. ...Cortina has published more than 40 papers in journals – most of which are very prestigious.”

Reviewer (E)

“Not only does Dr. Cortina have a wide-ranging command of the literature, but he also has a green thumb for empirical research, able to identify problems on which he can fruitfully bring his skills and knowledge to bear. ...I would rank Dr. Cortina among the most promising researchers in his field at his career state, both substantively and methodologically.”

Reviewer (F)

“Dr. Cortina’s work has been recognized with numerous awards and honors, including co-editorship of the *German Journal of Education*, invited addresses, and requests for reviews from prestigious journals. This level of productivity and recognized expertise across multiple domains is not often seen in a scholar at this level.”

Reviewer (G)

“I believe he should be promoted at the University of Michigan. In Kai you have a scholar making important contributions and bringing a unique comparative, cross-cultural perspective to the work on influences of schooling on children’s motivation, self-concepts, and achievement, and doing so using the most sophisticated statistical techniques available for such work.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Cortina is a superb scholar, teacher, and University citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Kai Schnabel Cortina be promoted to the rank of associate professor of psychology, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History, and Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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