

May 17, 2007

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

Mika T. LaVaque-Manty, assistant professor of political science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of political science, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1998	University of Michigan
B.A.	1990	University of Southern California

Professional Record:

2001 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Michigan
1999 – 2001	Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Washington
1998 – 2001	Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Washington

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – By almost any standard, Professor LaVaque-Manty is an extraordinary instructor. He has taught eight undergraduate and graduate courses that demonstrate his range as a political theorist. His syllabi are extraordinarily thorough documents. Students praise his availability, his empathy with students, and his ability to assess their strengths and weaknesses. They value his attention to argumentation, his assignments designed to develop their analytical abilities, and his commentary on student's papers. Remarkably, he has also served on twenty dissertation committees. In 2005 the department awarded him the Tronstein Prize for outstanding undergraduate teaching.

Research – Professor LaVaque-Manty's central aspiration is to help readers think more intelligently about familiar (and sometimes confused or poorly formulated) political debates by articulating the presuppositions about political life, political actors, and finally the world that undergirds these debates. In this sense, he aspires to clarify *how* we think about political issues, not *what* we should think about them. His portfolio of published, forthcoming, and in-process work indicates a pattern of steady scholarly production. Moreover, the range of his work is extraordinary and succeeds as a brief for his learning, curiosity, and talent.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Meaningful Competitions: From Dueling to Doping and Title IX, University of Michigan Press, forthcoming.

"Dueling for equality: Masculine honor and the modern politics of dignity," *Political Theory*, 34(6), 2006, pp. 715-740.

Arguments and Fists: Political Agency and Justification in Liberal Theory, Routledge, 2002.

"Food, functioning and justice: From famines to eating disorders," *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 9(2), 2001, pp. 150-167.

Service – Professor LaVaque-Manty’s leadership has been very important. He served on the department Executive Committee and the Graduate Affairs Committee, and is a member of the Graduate Admissions Committee. He volunteered to establish and staff an Advisory Committee on Information Technology, and he created and maintains the political theory website for the Department of Political Science. Last year he was the field coordinator for political theory, which involved overseeing a monthly workshop in which graduate students presented their work.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“The strength of Professor LaVaque-Manty’s work lies in the freshness of its approach, his willingness to situate theory within particular historical contexts, and his agility in moving among textual exegesis, larger conceptual debates, and examples from political practice.”

Reviewer (B)

“Intellectually, Professor LaVaque-Manty presents more as a fox than a hedgehog. He has a diverse set of interests and obviously reads very widely (and in many languages) in pursuit of those interests. He moves easily from the style of analytic philosophy to that of more historical approaches to political theory as well as to historical analysis of social and political phenomena themselves. I can well imagine that he is a stimulating and engaging colleague.”

Reviewer (C)

“...[*Arguments and Fists*] is written in a style that perfectly captures many of Professor LaVaque-Manty’s own distinctive ‘effects’: scholarly, witty, intellectually nimble, innovative, and utterly unpretentious in its originality. ...there is no doubt in my mind that Professor LaVaque-Manty does now and will continue to excel as a scholar and a writer and be heard as an important voice in the fields of political philosophy and political theory for (I hope) many years to come. He certainly ranks in my view among the very best of political theorists...”

Reviewer (D)

“...[*Meaningful Competitions*] is truly an engaging, interesting, highly readable and – again – very intelligent account of a range of literatures and historical phenomena, all roughly connected to competitions, athletics, and the like. When read in the context of *Arguments and Fists*, I’m frankly struck by LaVaque-Manty’s versatility and range. ... I think LaVaque-Manty has an impressive record, in terms of both quantity and quality. ...he certainly has the capacity, and I would guess the disposition, to be a productive, interesting, and estimable scholar for a long time indeed.”

Reviewer (E)

“[*Arguments and Fists*] is a great book. It does not read like a first book in political theory; it is considerably more sophisticated and more comparable with works of senior theorists.”

Reviewer (F)

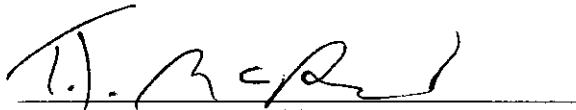
“...the studies themselves are fascinating, and their juxtaposition is surprising and thought-provoking. The quality of the scholarship...is very high, and the breadth and depth of LaVaque-Manty’s knowledge is sometimes astonishing.”

Reviewer (G)

"...I have no reservations about the intellectual quality of his scholarship. Mika is one of the smartest and most original scholars [of his generation] writing about the problems of liberal theory and practice. ...it's the quality, and especially the originality of scholarship where Mika's work really shines. I've never seen any scholar [of his generation] develop such a distinctive, yet serious scholarly voice so quickly."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor LaVaque-Manty is a gifted scholar, outstanding teacher, and exemplary colleague. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Mika T. LaVaque-Manty be promoted to the rank of associate professor of political science, 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

May 2007