

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

Approved by the Regents
May 15, 2008

María E. Cotera, assistant professor of Latino studies, Program in American Culture, and assistant professor of women's studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of American culture, with tenure, and associate professor of women's studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

2001 Ph.D. Stanford University
1994 M.A. University of Texas, Austin
1986 B.A. University of Texas, Austin

Professional Record:

2001 – present Assistant Professor, Program in American Culture and Department of Women's Studies, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Cotera is an innovative teacher and mentor in undergraduate and graduate settings. Her Gilbert Whitaker grant-winning “Introduction to Latina/o Studies” (AC 213) is a critical “gateway” course into the Latina/o Studies Concentration and the Latina/o Studies Minor. She teaches other core courses in both units and student evaluations place her consistently in the top 25% for the University and the College in the courses she teaches. She has served as chair or co-chair of three completed dissertations and has been on the committees for seven students.

Research – As a work of comparative ethnic women's studies, Professor Cotera's book, *Native Speakers* (forthcoming, University of Texas Press), is a lucid and compelling account of the encounters of three women of color with the American Academy and with their own communities in the interwar years. The result of careful archival work and deep theoretical reading, this book provides the model for future efforts in comparative ethnic women's studies. The rest of her portfolio is also important with two major editions of writings by Jovita González Mireles, two book chapters in important collections, and six articles in competitive journals. She is viewed as a scholar of high visibility, who is much in demand as a speaker in academic settings.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Native Speakers: Ella Cara Deloria, Zora Neale Hurston, Jovita González Mireles and the Poetics of Culture, University of Texas Press, forthcoming.

“Re/covering our history: *Caballero* and the gendered politics of form,” *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicana/o Studies*, 32(2), 2007, pp. 157-172.

Life Along the Border: A Landmark Tejana Thesis, co-edited with J. González, College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2006, pp. 3-33.

"Jovita González Mireles: A sense of history and homeland," in *Latina Legacies: Identity, Biography, and Community*, V. Ruiz and V. Sanchez-Korrol (eds.), New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 158-174.

Service – Professor Cotera has served as the Program in American Culture’s Sexual Harassment Liaison for the past two years. She also served on both the Program’s and the Department’s undergraduate committees at times when each committee overhauled and reassessed its unit’s curricula. She has been active in the Program’s efforts to recruit Latina/o studies faculty and her work in the Latina/o studies subunit has been remarkable. Professor Cotera has received numerous awards recognizing her service to the University, the community, students of color, and Latino students.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Her presence, pedagogy, and scholarship is [*sic*] unquestionably important to students as well as colleagues. ... In both quality and quantity, María Cotera’s publications equal if not exceed those of most scholars at her career stage. ... Cotera would without question be successful in being promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at [my institution] and I definitely think she should receive promotion and tenure at the University of Michigan.”

Reviewer (B)

“The breadth and depth of her interdisciplinary knowledge, as well as her expertise across these disparate discourses, is extraordinary. ... the sophisticated and nuanced ways in which she employs comparative research methodologies in her scholarship is ground-breaking in the field of Women’s Studies in particular. ... I anticipate that *Native Speakers* will earn the reputation among feminist scholars and others as being one of the most significant monographs to be published in 2008.”

Reviewer (C)

“... Professor Cotera has accomplished crucially significant bridge work between communities and areas of study through her scholarship. ... [and] has effectively created a space for scholars working in Chicana/o studies and Native American studies. ... Cotera’s feminist eye is what contributes to the power of her auspicious bridge-work and community-building. ... throughout her work, the pursuit of community in a vibrant, inclusive, layered and fluid sense is paramount.”

Reviewer (D)

“Her emphasis on the recovery of historical intellectual production is both unique and arduous. It is impressive that given the difficulty of her intellectual project at hand, both in terms of the broad scope of intellectual integration and actual archival work, she has been so productive in her writing. ... her forthcoming book *Native Speakers* (UT Press) will be a classic...”

Reviewer (E)

“... Cotera draws on a rich array of cultural studies theory but especially on recent trends in reflexive anthropology to make her compelling case. ... Her scholarship is of a very high quality as is her presence in a variety of public academic forums where she is consistently a stimulating and provocative voice. ... she will continue to enhance your department’s stellar reputation.”

Reviewer (F)

"...Cotera is one of a handful of scholars able to imagine as well as deploy a very ambitious comparative feminist practice. ...this is the direction that interdisciplinary feminist and race and ethnic studies needs to move in and Cotera's scholarship is at the cutting edge of this intellectual trajectory. ... I believe the University of Michigan is lucky to have this impressive scholar."

Reviewer (G)

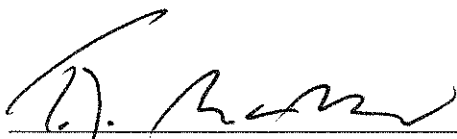
"Professor Cotera has crafted a stunning first book. I appreciate the ways in which she places these women on a parallel plane, bringing them into creative conversations that highlight the beginnings of a multivalent feminist of color discourse, one that is neither fixed nor pre-determined. ...Cotera's monograph should be a strong contender for several awards... If María Eugenia Cotera were up for tenure and promotion at my university, she would have an air-tight case. She is quite simply the most remarkable Chicana literary critic of her generation."

Reviewer (H)

"...Cotera stands at the forefront of a new generation of scholars who focus on feminist women of color. With her knowledge and mastery of literary theory, anthropology, folklore, philosophy, and especially Chicana cultural production, Professor Cotera makes important and, at times groundbreaking, contributions to women of color literature and cultural production. ... The rate of her production is truly commendable. I firmly believe that the intellectual rigor of her publications in addition to the originality of her multiple projects merits promotion..."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Cotera is an emerging leader in her field who will continue to produce outstanding research. Her contributions to the teaching and service missions of the College have been substantial. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor María E. Cotera be promoted to the rank of associate professor of American culture, with tenure, and associate professor of women's studies, 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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