

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

Ramaswami Mahalingam, 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:

|       |      |                             |
|-------|------|-----------------------------|
| PhD   | 1998 | University of Pittsburgh    |
| M.Ed. | 1994 | University of Pittsburgh    |
| B.E.  | 1982 | Annamalai University, India |

Professional Record:

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| 2003           | Visiting Professor, Department of Psychology, City University of New York                        |
| 2001 – present | Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, Department of Psychology  |
| 2001 – present | Center Associate, Center for South Asian Studies, University of Michigan                         |
| 2001 – 2007    | Assistant Research Scientist, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, University of Michigan |
| 1998 – 2001    | Fellow, Michigan Society of Fellows, University of Michigan                                      |

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Mahalingam has mastered the art of challenging students while maintaining a climate of mutual respect in discussions of topics that generate intense emotions. These courses include culture and gender, the psychology of immigration, and gender and the individual. Students at all levels give him significantly higher than average ratings on question about the quality of the course and the teacher. These ratings easily place him among the top quartile of teachers in both the university and the college. Professor Mahalingam has also engaged in a significant amount of informal teaching of undergraduate and graduate students.

Research – Professor Mahalingam’s research focuses on the roles of social categorization and social identities in the beliefs, behavior, and adjustments of individuals. His expertise extends across several areas of psychology, including personality, social, and developmental. All of his research questions are firmly embedded within the cultural context of individual’s lives. His most recent paper in *Human Development* integrates his lines of research into a creative, innovative theoretical perspective on marginality, power, and social identity. He is described as a leading researcher in cultural psychology, who is taking the field to new places.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Idealized cultural beliefs about gender: Implications for mental health,” with B. Jackson, *Social Epidemiology and Social Psychiatry*, in press.

“Essentialism, power and the representation of social categories: An integrated perspective,” *Human Development*, 50(6), 2007, pp. 300-319.

*Cultural Psychology of Immigrants*, edited volume, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006.

“Culture, brain transplants and implicit theories of identity,” with J. Rodriguez, *Journal of Culture and Cognition*, 6(3-4), 2006, pp.452-462.

Service – Professor Mahalingam’s level of service in all areas has been extensive. He has been an active member on multiple departmental committees, has served on the College’s Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and is currently serving in the University Senate. He has had two highly successful international conferences, has served as a reviewer of fellowship applications for the National Science Foundation and the Social Science Research Council. Professor Mahalingam has also served on several committees of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues and the Society for Research on Adolescence.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...I find Ram to be a creative and highly productive scholar who already has made important contributions to the field of cultural psychology and who is poised to make additional contributions to fields such as immigration, evolution and human behavior, and developmental psychology. ... I believe he would receive promotion and tenure [at my institution]...”

Reviewer (B)

“...his publication record is superb, and he is an extremely creative scholar, one highly skilled in both qualitative and quantitative research methods. ...his record compares very favorably with those 5-6 years beyond postdoctoral training.”

Reviewer (C)

“...I am very impressed with the originality, creativity, importance, and systematicity of his research and research program. ... Dr. Mahalingam is a productive, prolific scholar, who has carved out several unique programs of research that have broad implications for psychology and social life, and move the traditional boundaries of academia in significant and important ways.”

Reviewer (D)

“...I have the very highest respect for Ram Mahalingam – he is unquestionably one of the most promising ‘rising stars’ in his generation of scholars. He is an exceptionally creative and rigorous researcher, an intellectually sophisticated and complex theoretician, a prolific and highly productive scientist, and a very generous and generative mentor. ...I have almost never written a letter of support as enthusiastic and unqualified as this one...”

Reviewer (E)

“He has emerged as a leader in a new generation of cultural psychologists. He has already left his mark on this field by showing us the workings of social essentialism... His distinctive voice is also apparent in the range of tough and original problems that he has tackled, problems that have profound consequences in the real world.”

Reviewer (F)

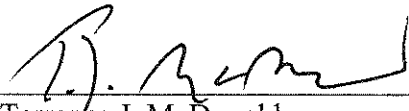
“Dr. Mahalingam is one of the leading researchers [of his generation] in the study of implicit theories of social identity and their relevance to gender, mental health issues, and immigrant/marginalized status.”

Reviewer (G)

“...Mahalingam has made major theoretical contributions in his short 6 years of scholarship as Assistant Professor. His work synthesizes theories of essentialism and power, applying them in novel ways to the study of race, gender, class, caste, and immigrant identities. He extends the work of the most prominent theorist in the area...by taking into greater account the roles of culture...”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Mahalingam's research is path breaking, his teaching is strong, and he has an outstanding commitment to service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Ramaswami Mahalingam be promoted to the rank of associate professor of psychology, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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