

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION

The University of Michigan
School of Education

Stephen L. DesJardins, associate professor of education, with tenure, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, School of Education, is recommended for promotion to professor of education, with tenure, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, School of Education.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1996	Educational Policy & Administration – Higher Education	University of Minnesota
M.A.	1994	Public Affairs	University of Minnesota
B.A.	1983	Economics	Northern Michigan University

Professional Experience:

2002-Present	Associate Professor, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE), School of Education, University of Michigan
2002-2002	Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Iowa
1998-2002	Assistant Professor, School of Education, University of Iowa (with a .5 appointment as a Senior Policy Analyst in the University of Iowa Provost's Office).
1996-1998	Lecturer, School of Education, University of Minnesota

Summary of Evaluation:Teaching:

Professor DesJardins is an effective teacher who invests significant time in both his formal classroom teaching as well as his mentoring activities. He has developed and taught five courses since he joined the faculty here in 2002: EDUC 863 Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research, EDUC 871 National Economic and Financial Issues in Postsecondary Education, EDUC 764 Public Policy in Postsecondary Education (cross-listed with Public Policy and Political Science), EDUC 768 Economics of Education, and EDUC 771 Categorical and Limited Dependent Variable Modeling. EDUC 764 is the “gateway” course in public policy for doctoral students in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE; doctoral students are required to complete gateway courses in two of the three concentration areas). E&E ratings for his courses are consistently strong, with median student ratings on Questions 1 (“Overall, this was an excellent course”) and 2 (“Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher”) at 4.0 or above in most categories and never below 3.75. Professor DesJardins makes extensive use of written assignments in his classes and provides ample feedback to his students, something noted by students in written comments in E&E feedback as a positive feature of his teaching.

In addition to formal teaching within CSHPE, Professor DesJardins has chaired the comprehensive qualifying examination committee and has worked to build the dual-degree program with Public Policy and serves as the advisor to all dual-degree master's students. Professor DesJardins has invested significant time in mentoring students. Since his arrival at Michigan, Professor DesJardins has served as chair of eight dissertation committees, as co-chair of two and as a member on 13 dissertation committees. He has also served as cognate member on 4 dissertation committees in the Economics Department and one dissertation committee at Vanderbilt University. He has served as

academic advisor to 31 students, including 15 Ph.D. students and nine M.A. students in CSHPE and seven dual-degree Master's students in CSHPE and Public Policy.

Research:

Professor DesJardins' record presents strong and consistent evidence of high-quality scholarship since his promotion to associate professor. His program of research comprises three lines of inquiry: (1) research on student departure from college; (2) research on college choice theory; and (3) policy analysis and program evaluation related to higher education.

In the six years since his last promotion, Professor DesJardins has published six articles in peer-reviewed journals, three chapters in peer-reviewed volumes, authored three invited chapters and authored five reports for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and a report to the Congressional Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance. The quality of the publication outlets selected by Professor DesJardins is uniformly high. Furthermore, two reviewers noted that it was unusual and impressive that Professor DesJardins has published four chapters in the well-respected and influential *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*. Professor DesJardins is first author of nearly all of these publications.

Professor DesJardins' work on event history methods is a major contribution of his research. Although primarily informing his research on student departure, this work also figures into other aspects of his scholarship and has influenced the work and thinking of the field, as indicated in reviewers' comments. A second area of focus for Professor DesJardins has been factors affecting the college choice process used by prospective college students, another area of great institutional interest and therefore a key area in the study of higher education. A third area of focus for Professor DesJardins is policy evaluation research. Professor DesJardins' scholarship in this area is well respected and he has applied his methodological expertise to questions of institutional aid policy, tuition and fee policies and academic support policies for students. He has also investigated such core topics as the return on investment to states from student enrollment (and support for that enrollment) in public universities.

Professor DesJardins has established himself as a well-respected scholar in higher education, well-known for both his specialized methodological expertise and also for his substantive contributions to understanding of critical areas of knowledge related to college choice and student success in college. Noteworthy, too, is that he has contributed as a scholar of higher education to university and college policies and practices.

Selected Recent and Representative Publications

1. DesJardins, S.L., & McCall, B.P. (under review). The impact of the Gates Millennium Scholars program on the retention, college finance- and work-related choices, and future educational aspirations of low-income minority students. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*.
2. DesJardins, S.L., Ahlburg, D.A., & McCall, B.P. (2006). The effects of interrupted enrollment on graduation from college: Racial, income, and ability differences. *Economics of Education Review*, 25(6), 575-590.
3. DesJardins, S.L., Ahlburg, D.A., & McCall, B.P. (2006). An integrated model of application, admission, enrollment, and financial aid. *Journal of Higher Education*, 77(3), 381- 429.
4. DesJardins, S.L., & Toutkoushian, R.K. (2005). Are students really rational? The development of rational thought and its application to student choice. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, XX, pp. 191-240.

5. DesJardins, S.L. (2003). The returns to instruction of a University of Minnesota education. In D. Lewis and J. Hearn (Eds.), *The public research university: Serving the public good in new times*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, pp. 175-205.
6. DesJardins, S.L. (2003). Event history methods: Conceptual issues and an application to student departure from college. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research XVIII*, pp. 421-471.

External Reviews:

Reviewer A: [Professor DesJardins has] “clearly developed a couple of important lines of scholarly inquiry, and must be seen as one of the nation’s leading experts on the topics of college choice and student retention. . . . I would place him in the first rank of higher education scholars who earned their PhDs in the 1990s.”

Reviewer B: “When Professor DesJardins writes or speaks on his main analytic issues, his colleagues unfailingly pay attention. He is increasingly well cited in our field’s publications and is becoming one of the central figures in his various areas of research. . . . He is widely recognized for his methodological and theoretical expertise . . . and is an increasingly acknowledged primary authority on issues of academic progress among college students, i.e., student choice, mobility, performance, retention, and outcomes.”

Reviewer C: “I consider Steve to be one of the very best researchers in the areas of financial aid, college choice, and student persistence. In addition, although Steve does not hold a doctorate in economics nor is he an econometrician, I consider him to be one of the leading methodologists in his use of econometric techniques and other advanced multivariate techniques to examine important policy issues in higher education.”

Reviewer D: “Much of his work has focused on a technique borrowed from labor economics and the field of health -- event history or ‘hazard’ analysis -- and on a problem -- the effect of university policies (especially student aid policies) on the incidence of dropout. . . . This focus combines Steve’s good statistical and analytical skills with his interest in policy very nicely.”

Reviewer E: “Dr. Desjardins has established, sustained and substantially elevated a program of research and publication in the areas of student enrollment behavior, the effects of financial and other factors on that behavior, the use of innovative methodological approaches in the analysis of policies and enrollment behavior, and his research has been both conducted and presented in ways that maintain the connection between research and practice in the reader’s mind. Professor Desjardins has also demonstrated a keen sense of what needs to be studied in these important areas, has been very creative in seeking out perspectives that had been previously ignored or under-investigated in the field, and has developed innovative research designs that have unearthed insights previously masked by some of the methodological decisions of other researchers. . . . I would rank him among the very best scholars in the country in terms of methodological sophistication and innovativeness, conceptual openness and creativity, and the complex modeling of the application, admission, financial aid and enrollment decision-making behavior of students.”

Reviewer F: “I believe that Professor DesJardins has established an outstanding publication record and accompanying reputation both within the education and economics profession. Professor DesJardins is a rare scholar in that he has managed to traverse the border between education and economics, which I believe is to the betterment of both professions. In particular, he has brought to economics a deeper understanding of the institutional features of higher education that have

highlighted the shortcomings of the static empirical approaches largely adopted by economists to study student matriculation behavior. As an economist, I am sorry to say that we are not always very willing to accept contributions from scholars outside our discipline. It is a testament to Dr. DesJardins work that he has managed to bridge this gap.”

Service:

Professor DesJardins has provided extensive service to his program, the School of Education, the larger University and his field. Professor DesJardins has served as an associate editor and editorial board member for the influential journal *Economics of Education Review*. Professor DesJardins also served as an associate editor of the methodology section of the *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* series. He has also been an *ad hoc* referee for many journals, conferences and granting agencies. Professor DesJardins’ service has been recognized with two awards, one from the Association for the Study of Higher Education for distinguished service as budget director to the organization and one the joint NCES/AIR/NSF award for Advisory Panel Service in recognition of his outstanding contributions.

At both the University of Michigan and his previous institutions, Professor DesJardins has provided extensive service in his areas of research-based expertise related to student recruitment, enrollment and graduation rates. At Michigan alone, he has served on university-wide committees on financial policy, financial aid policy, course demand and space utilization. He was also a member of the Provost’s Faculty Advisory Committee, has chaired or served on several key search committees and served as a senior advisor to Dean Ball.

Summary of Recommendation:

Stephen DesJardins’ interests are in the economics of higher education and he is considered to be an expert in the use of new statistical tools to study such factors as how tuition costs affect student enrollment and retention. Professor DesJardins’ work, using temporal modeling of student dropout and stop-out behavior, is a significant contribution to higher education research. He is also known for careful studies of the impact of institutional policies on undergraduate students’ persistence. He has published widely in top-tier academic journals and is quoted in the media at large about issues such as trends in college financial aid. He is highly regarded for his research. A dedicated and skillful instructor, Professor DesJardins teaches several of the key courses in the higher education program and has consistently provided service to his program, the School of Education and the university and has been recognized with awards for his dedication to community.



Deborah Loewenberg Ball, Dean
School of Education
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