

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

Sara L. Ahbel-Rappe, associate professor of Greek and Latin, with tenure, Department of Classical Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of Greek and Latin, with tenure, Department of Classical Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

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| Ph.D. | 1991 | University of California at Berkeley |
| M.A. | 1986 | University of California at Berkeley |
| B.A. | 1981 | University of California at Berkeley |

Professional Record:

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| 1999 – present | Associate Professor, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan |
| 1992 – 1999 | Assistant Professor, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan |
| 1991 – 1992 | Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan |

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Ahbel-Rappe is a strong instructor who contributes to teaching at all levels, including large lecture courses, language courses, and graduate seminars. Especially notable is her dedication to teaching courses that meet the upper-level writing requirement. As concentration advisor she led the development of the concentration in classical civilizations and expanded the outreach of the concentration programs in language. Her courses are well organized and wide ranging. Student evaluations are very strong.

Research – Professor Ahbel-Rappe’s scholarship centers on two very different areas: neo-Platoism and Socrates. She is a truly original scholar, and a very productive one as well. She has completed a major annotated introduction to and translation of an important text that has been neglected precisely because it so difficult. She has also co-edited a collection of articles in addition to publishing six articles of her own and nine reviews. Her articles are important and original. Her forthcoming book on Socrates is going to be controversial, provoking intense interest even among those who disagree with it.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Translation of Damascius’ “Doubts and Solutions Concerning First Principles” for the American Academy of Religion Texts and Translations Series, Oxford University Press. 2009.

Socrates: A Guide for the Perplexed, Continuum Press. 2009.

“Self-knowledge from Socrates to Suhrawardi,” *Proceedings of the International Society of Neoplatonic Studies*, 2007.

“Plato and later religious traditions,” in *Blackwell Companion to Plato*, H. Benson (ed.), 2006.

Service – Professor Ahbel-Rappe has performed enormously valuable service for her Department. Most notable is her leadership in developing and transforming the curriculum in classical civilization. She has also served as vice president for the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...the texts written by Sara Ahbel-Rappe are interesting owing to their originality... [she] has worked and published a great deal... She is open to new trends of interpretation and other interpretative traditions.”

Reviewer (B)

“Her *Reading Neoplatonism* (2000) is a remarkably creative work on a wide range of authors in the later Platonic tradition from which I continue to draw inspiration. This book is on my short list of the best books on Neoplatonism philosophy and religion in the past 25 years. ... Her forthcoming translation of Damascius’ *Doubts and Solutions* is a fine contribution to Neoplatonic studies. Sara has produced a highly readable and accurate translation of a very difficult text... The quality of this translation alone is enough to warrant promotion.”

Reviewer (C)

“Professor Rappe’s standing in the field of Neoplatonism is good. My colleagues respect her work, and her articles and book are cited regularly. ... If I were to list the top twenty books that have come out in Neoplatonic studies in the past ten years, her *Reading Neoplatonism* would be among them. ... She has provided an explanation that is the starting point now for my colleagues as they embark on research into the upper metaphysical realms of the Neoplatonic universe.”

Reviewer (D)

“At present, Sara Ahbel-Rappe is best known as a scholar of Neoplatonism and one with substantial achievements in this area; the publication of the Damascius book will enhance this standing. ...the publication of the Socrates book will also give her significant standing within this area of ancient philosophy...”

Reviewer (E)

“Her approach to Neoplatonism, particularly in her book *Reading Neoplatonism*, is novel and refreshing. ...she has many fine and challenging things to say. Her employment of modern hermeneutical theories and insights also adds a new dimension to her work. ...she has opened up an important debate on many issues.”

Reviewer (F)

“One can now consider Sara alongside others doing high-profile translations of later Platonist texts; and I thought that this new volume promises to be very much more of a breakthrough... The introduction I found excellent, a really useful piece of work. It provides the best English introduction to Damascius...”

Reviewer (G)

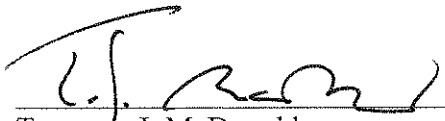
"I am quite certain that Rappe's *Reading Neoplatonism* book is one of the most significant books to have appeared recently in Neoplatonic studies. I believe, too, tht the edited volume on Socrates was masterful. The scope of that volume is far broader than that of comparable volumes, making it a much richer collection than others. Since virtually all the papers that appeared in that volume appear there for the first time, the effort expended to produce it was all the greater. ... Her work is original, thorough, judicious, thoughtful, and thought-provoking. Her erudition is admirable. She has been extremely productive and the work she has produced is of a very high quality."

Reviewer (H)

"...it is a pleasure for me to write this letter in support of your colleague Sara Ahbel-Rappe. Moreover, I enthusiastically endorse your department's proposal to promote her to the rank of Professor. Over the last 10 years, Sara has left her mark on the field of ancient philosophy, and she has established herself as one of the leading scholars of Neoplatonism in late antiquity."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Ahbel-Rappe is a lively and provocative scholar with an unusually wide range. She is a strong teacher and has shown leadership in her service to the Department. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Sara L. Ahbel-Rappe be promoted to the rank of professor of Greek and Latin, with tenure, Department of Classical Studies, 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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