

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

Robert W. Mickey, 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.	2005	Harvard University
B.A.	1990	Brown University

Professional Record:

2006 – 2008	Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research, University of California, Berkeley
2002 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Mickey’s teaching record, both undergraduate and graduate, is strong. His courses are well planned, ambitious in scope, and highly demanding. Students at all levels praise his courses for their depth and the insights they gain. Graduate students especially note his skill in introducing students to the research process. He has played a key role in the Department’s honors program. In addition, he has supervised numerous independent studies, and his record of mentoring undergraduate and graduate students is exemplary.

Research – Professor Mickey conducts research in the area of American political development. His forthcoming book, *Paths Out of Dixie*, focuses on the American South’s transition from white supremacist rule to democratic governance. This book is likely to set a new standard in research on political development and is almost certain to have a major impact within and beyond political science. It has significant implications for the way we understand the nature and stability of partisan competition, for how we understand the ways in which race and class (and business) enter American politics, and for the stereotypical ways we have come to think about southern politics. Finally, *Paths Out of Dixie* demonstrates the theoretical relevance of strategic behavior by political elites.

Recent and Significant Publications:

*Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America’s Deep South, 1944-1972*, Princeton University Press, forthcoming 2009.

“The beginning of the end for authoritarian rule in America: *Smith v. Allwright* and the abolition of the white primary in the Deep South, 1944-1948,” *Studies in American Political Development*, 22(2), 2008, pp. 143-182.

“Explaining the contemporary alignment of race and party: Evidence from California’s 1946 ballot initiative on fair employment,” with A. S. Chen and R. P. Van Houweling, *Studies in American Political Development*, 22(2), 2008, pp. 204-228.

“Safe at any speed: Legislative intent, the Electoral Count Act of 1887, and *Bush v. Gore*.” With E. Schickler and T. Bimes, *Journal of Law and Politics* 16 (4), 2001, pp. 717-764.

Service – Professor Mickey has compiled an excellent record of service. He has served on the Department’s Executive Committee, Graduate Admissions Committee, and a search committee, and he has done an excellent job in each of these assignments. He has also provided other public goods on his own initiative (e.g., setting up a workshop on political institutions and another workshop for junior faculty to present their research). At the university level, he has developed, in collaboration with colleagues in history and sociology, an interdisciplinary workshop on Race and American Political Development. Beginning this year, he is a faculty advisory member for the Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Program in the School of Public Health. He is also reviewing papers for several leading journals and presses.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...[*Paths Out of Dixie*] is a remarkable achievement. It has been from the start. It is the next book after *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Not even advanced professors tackle these questions in this way. ...he is really someone quite special.”

Reviewer (B)

“I have come away from reading Mickey’s work with a heartfelt feeling of deep admiration but also nontrivial jealousy. I wish I had – I wish I *could* have – written Mickey’s book *Paths Out of Dixie*. *Paths Out of Dixie* is nothing short of a masterpiece. It is one of those once-in-a-generation books that will redefine entire subfields in our discipline.”

Reviewer (C)

“I have not run across any other scholar in the field that situates his work as systematically in comparative theoretical debates. Nor have I read a book on American Political Development that portrays the U.S. case as accessibly to a broad community of comparative scholars as *Paths Out of Dixie*.”

Reviewer (D)

“The book is boldly yet carefully argued, meticulously researched, and breathtakingly comprehensive in its narrative sweep, which spans the entire civil rights era. In the tradition of V.O. Key Jr., Professor Mickey lays bare both the distinctiveness of southern politics and its central importance to a complete understanding of the broader story of American politics. This is a substantial achievement.”

Reviewer (E)

“Mickey is a rising star, perhaps the single best untenured scholar in the rapidly growing field of American Political Development. I am extremely impressed by the care and insight in his scholarship. And his book has...achieved considerable visibility. ... It is truly outstanding, it will become part of the canon.”

Reviewer (F)

“He is a smart, original scholar who argues clearly and forcefully. His work offers a novel contribution to American politics and has the rare potential to be an important book in more than one discipline. ... The brilliance of Mickey’s first book is examining the history of the American South in the mid-twentieth century as an example of democratization and regime change. After reading Mickey’s work I simply will not be able to teach the political history this period in the same way.”

Reviewer (G)

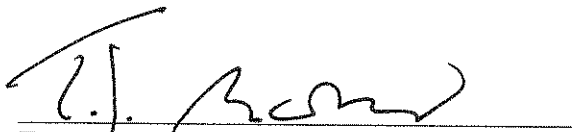
“He is an extraordinary scholar – and he is just about to make an enormous splash. Your situation is a bit like tenuring Melville before the publication of *Moby Dick* or Cervantes before the appearance of *Don Quixote*. It’s a sure bet, in other words.”

Reviewer (H)

“Mickey clearly merits promotion. He is an outstanding scholar whose forthcoming book will consolidate his reputation as a very significant contributor to the field. His record to date provides ample grounds for confidence that he will continue to be a productive scholar and an important figure in the discipline.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Mickey is a leading scholar of his generation in the growing subfield of American political development. He is also an excellent teacher and a superb colleague. The Executive Committee and I recommend that Assistant Professor Robert W. Mickey 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

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