

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

Approved by the Regents
May 14, 2009

Oscar Ybarra, associate professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1996	New Mexico State University
M.A.	1993	New Mexico State University
M.A.	1990	Sul Ross State University
B.A.	1988	Sul Ross State University

Professional Record:

2001 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
1996 – 2001	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan
1996 – present	Faculty Associate and Project Director, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Ybarra has taught a range of undergraduate and graduate courses at the interface of social psychology and cognition. As reflected in his syllabi and student responses, he is very thoughtful about course pedagogy. He has supervised or mentored twelve graduate students in the pre-candidacy phase and eight students as candidates, as well as undergraduates ranging from first year Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program students to senior thesis students (48 since last promotion). He has been particularly successful at including graduate students in his research publications (75% of papers since his last promotion include student authors).

Research – Understanding how an individual arrives at a positive or negative perception of another person requires an understanding of several psychological processes, including how the perceiver processes social information, how the perceiver integrates information about others, and how existing biases and misunderstandings distort the interpretation of social information. Professor Ybarra is particularly concerned with people’s special sensitivity to social information, and the adaptive significance of this sensitivity, not only for success in social relationships, but also for intellectual performance more generally. His research demonstrates the importance of social information processing and illuminates the specific mechanisms that underlie it.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Mental exercising through simple socializing: Social interaction promotes general cognitive functioning,” with E. Burnstein, et al., *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 2008, pp. 248-259.

“The effects of realistic threats and group identification on social dominance orientation,” with K. Rios Morrison, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 2008, pp. 156-163.

“Reversing the affective congruity effect: The role of target accessibility,” with E. Chean and N. Schwarz, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 32, 2006, pp. 365-372.

“The role of threats in the racial attitudes of Blacks and Whites,” with W. G. Stephan, et al., *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 2002, pp. 1242-1254.

Service – Professor Ybarra's service record is excellent and demonstrates his commitment to students, the social area, and the department. He has also served the profession more broadly. For example, he serves on the editorial board of two journals that are emerging as important sub-disciplinary journals. In addition, he is frequently called upon to referee journal articles for many of the leading journals in psychology and, more specifically, social psychology. He has played an important role for his field with his ability to bring social psychology to the public through media presentations of his work.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“His work on how social interaction may stimulate and increase intelligence is profoundly interesting and thought-provoking. ... I hope to see more work along these lines from his laboratory in future years.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Ybarra continues to demonstrate high scholarly standards. ...[he] continues to publish in top, highly competitive journals. ... His 2002 *Psychological Bulletin* review paper is one of my favorites. It addresses an important issue from a new perspective. The paper is clearly written, well organized, and well reasoned. The literature review is excellent... It is conceptually mature and sophisticated scholarship.”

Reviewer (C)

“Dr. Ybarra’s *Psychological Bulletin* article...would be one of the papers I would cite as one of the most significant I have seen in the area of social judgment, one that will have an enduring impact on the field. ... Dr. Ybarra’s work is diverse... It is delightful to see how broad an impact this work has had.”

Reviewer (D)

“His work is well grounded in a sophisticated understanding of social cognition and the motivations of social beings. His methods span the range of cultural comparisons, surveys, and experiments... His scholarly productivity appears in our flagship journals, both theoretical...and empirical...”

Reviewer (E)

“One fact of immediate note is just how impressive his publication record is, in both quantity and quality. ... Looking at his work as a whole, Dr. Ybarra is clearly an innovative thinker. He is an excellent theorist... I have no doubt that his ability to make theoretically interesting connections between subjects and his strong commitment to understanding the world will serve him well throughout his career.”

Reviewer (F)

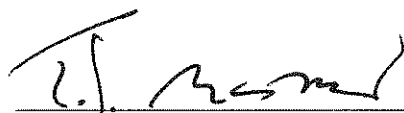
“He has made many outstanding contributions to the literature in social psychology. His work is both innovative and provocative, and...carefully conducted and well crafted. He has a broad theoretical vision and is creative in the methods he applies to explore these ideas. His work is increasingly being cited...”

Reviewer (G)

“...I actually enjoyed the opportunity to look through Oscar Ybarra’s materials. ...I was very favorably impressed with the ideas he is developing... ..he is doing very nice work, publishing it in first line journals, and he is thinking about important issues at the forefront of where the field is moving.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Ybarra has an excellent record of research and teaching, and he is committed to service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Oscar Ybarra be promoted to the rank of professor of psychology, 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

May 2009