

May 14, 2009

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
 The University of Michigan  
 School of Music, Theatre & Dance  
 Department of Theatre & Drama

OyamO Gordon, associate professor of theatre and drama, with tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, is recommended for promotion to professor of theatre and drama, with tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

**Academic Degrees:**

M.F.A.	1981	Yale University
B.A.	1979	College of New Rochelle

**Professional Record:**

1993 – present	Associate Professor of Theatre and Drama, Department of Theatre & Drama, School of Music, Theatre & Dance
1991 – 1993	Associate Professor of English Language and Literature, College of LS&A and Associate Professor of Theatre and Drama, School of Music, Theatre & Dance
1989 – 1990	Adjunct Associate Professor of English Language and Literature, College of LS&A
1986 – 1987	Visiting Lecturer, Princeton University
1982 – 1983	Writer-in-Residence, Emory University

**Summary of Evaluation:**

**Teaching:**

Consistently enthusiastic evaluations reflect Professor Gordon's commitment and devotion to his students. He is a caring and productive teacher, and students flock to his courses. His students value his mentoring, wisdom and accessibility. Professor Gordon nurtures and sharpens students' strengths, but also affords them guidance, techniques and knowledge to overcome their weaknesses in a positive and productive environment. He is the only faculty member to teach playwriting, and is quite distinguished in this offering; one of Professor Gordon's students recently won the Hopwood Award for playwriting. That student's work will be given a full production in the Arthur Miller Theatre in winter 2009. It will also tour to Prague, Czech Republic, where it will be entered into an international theatre festival during the summer.

**Professional and Creative Activity:**

Professor Gordon is a respected and prolific playwright. His curriculum vitae reflects how extensively his creative work has been produced across the country. Many external reviewers are struck by the venues in which his work has been produced, including such leading regional theatres as the Goodman, the Alliance Theatre, Kuntu Repertory Company (Pittsburgh), the Manhattan Theatre Club, and the Seattle Children's Theatre among many others. He is an artist who deftly incorporates scholarly research and investigation into his playwriting. He brings compassion, humanity and historical context to his work. Since receiving tenure in 1991, he has written and produced 16 plays, and he shows no sign of slowing down. He has received support from major foundations such as the Guggenheim, Rockefeller and McKnight, and has received three fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Service:**

Professor Gordon service record is extensive and exemplary, both inside and outside the University. He is always willing to serve on departmental committees. He has participated on numerous faculty search committees and task forces. He was particularly instrumental as a member of the Joint Faculty Committee on Interarts Performance that created the proposal for a joint B.F.A. degree program with the School of Art and Design. His is a voice of wisdom, and brings a thoughtful, positive and insightful

approach to any service-oriented task he undertakes. Professor Gordon is a model colleague who has earned the admiring respect of his colleagues over the years.

**External Reviewers:**

**Reviewer A**

“He is an artist whom I have respected for many years for his creative accomplishments. Professor Gordon appears eminently qualified for promotion to full professor. He has a very impressive body of creative work which has been authenticated in the numerous mountings of his plays.”

**Reviewer B**

“Professor Gordon seems to be a fine example of the mature artist-scholar-teacher. There is an admirable wholeness to his career. In reading the file, I could not easily separate the playwriting from the community engagement from the research from the teaching. There also seems to be a genuine interconnectedness of creative and critical thinking.”

**Reviewer C**

“These outstanding African American dramatists positively influenced American and colonial English speaking playwriting since then, and one of the main bulwarks of this neophyte group was Charles ‘OyamO’ Gordon.”

**Reviewer D**

“The inclusion of forty-three of his plays in Black Drama Collection’s Online Publications speaks to his prolific output and the place of his work in the canon. I am confident the candidate has accomplishments comparable to most currently holding the rank of professor of theatre at premiere institutions throughout the country.”

**Reviewer E**

“Professor OyamO’s contribution to American dramatic literature has been remarkable with its focus on Black history and the cultural and social events that are so critical to the African American experience. The University of Michigan is fortunate to have an outstanding artist on their faculty who can contribute so much to the diversity and professional profile of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance.”

**Reviewer F**

“Professor Charles ‘OyamO’ Gordon is a prolific playwright. His file suggests not only that he has achieved success, but that he will continue to produce work that is intellectually substantive. Professor Gordon stands out for his productive combination of rigorous research and engaging playwriting.”

**Reviewer G**

“In calibrating his artistic output and theatre involvement over the decades, one must conclude that Professor Gordon has maintained exceptional pacing and purpose. His creativity remains very much in good form and his intellectual curiosity has not waned.”

**Reviewer H**

“I have no doubt that OyamO will continue adding to his already-impressive body of work and enhancing his stature as an agent of cultural and social change. And my first-hand experience confirms his excellent record as a teacher, mentor, and colleague.”

**Reviewer I**

“The volume of work he has produced is impressive. The number of his plays that have been produced is impressive. The sheer number of his works that have been recognized is impressive. There is no doubt Mr. Gordon has achieved national recognition and the respect of his peers.”

**Reviewer J**

“OyamO’s record of accomplishments and the superb recommendations of his students and peers speak for themselves. His humility, humanity, scholarship, creativity and life-long dedication to the unlimited and real possibilities of the imagination are qualities that would grace any institution.”

**Reviewer K**

“Based on the impact that Professor Gordon has clearly made and continues to make in the field and based upon the reputation he enjoys among his grateful students, I recommend that he be promoted to the rank of Professor.”

**Reviewer L**

“He is a productive playwright who continues to command the attention and respect of many of his peers. I sense that he communicates to students a curiosity, love, and commitment to theatre and life itself that they find inspiring, as they try to determine their own paths.”

**Reviewer M**

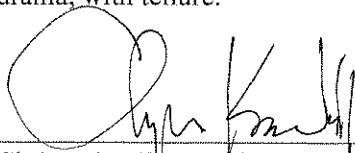
“His comments are often mind-boggling, insightful, and deftly humorous. It is without hesitation that I recommend him highly for his promotion to full professor. He virtually has no equal in the American Theatre.”

**Internal Review:**

Professor Gordon is a model colleague who is always willing to help and who brings balance and common sense to all matters. His colleagues acknowledge not only the depth of his character, but his commitment to the students above all things. He is receptive to advice and change. He is thoroughly committed to his art.

**Summary of Recommendation:**

Professor Gordon is a delightful colleague, respected teacher, and a prolific and accomplished playwright. His contributions to the field are numerous, and he continues to play a major role in the Department of Theatre & Drama. It is with the unanimous support of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance Executive Committee that I enthusiastically recommend OyamO Gordon for promotion to professor of theatre and drama, with tenure.



---

Christopher W. Kerndall  
Dean, School of Music, Theatre & Dance

May 2009