

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
School of Natural Resources and Environment

Approved by the Regents
May 20, 2010

Larissa S. Larsen, assistant professor of urban planning, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, and assistant professor of landscape architecture, School of Natural Resources and Environment, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of urban planning, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, and associate professor of landscape architecture, without tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1997	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
M.L.A.	1992	University of Guelph (Canada)
B.A.Sc.	1989	University of Guelph (Canada)

Professional Record:

2005-Present	Assistant Professor of Urban Planning, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan
2002-Present	Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture, School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan
2000-2002	Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture, Arizona State University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Larsen has taught four different graduate courses in the Urban and Regional Planning (URP) Program, including Theories of Urban Design, Environmental Planning, Physical and Urban Design Studio, and the program's Capstone Project course. All are central to the URP curriculum. Professor Larsen is an exceptional teacher. Students have selected her for the outstanding teacher award on three occasions during her time at Michigan, twice for her teaching in URP and once for her teaching in SNRE. She received a similar award as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Except for a single semester for her Capstone course, which had an overall course evaluation score of 3.50 based on only four student evaluators, her overall course evaluation scores for 16 URP courses over eight semesters have been evaluated on average 4.00 or higher, and 10 of those courses earned a score of 4.25 or higher. Her courses are consistently full and sometimes have to be capped because of excess demand given their central contributions to the URP curriculum and her exceptional teaching skills.

Students uniformly praise the education they have received from Professor Larsen, consistently noting that she is both a teacher and a mentor. In particular, they cite her abilities to challenge them while at the same time finding creative ways to connect with those of differing abilities and backgrounds; to incorporate her scholarship in her teaching; to involve them in her research; and to integrate the theory and practice of planning, enriching their studies in ways that have substantially helped them in their own professional experiences since graduation. A notable indicator of Professor Larsen's teaching strength is the numerous awards that her students have received for class projects from organizations such as the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association, the American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA) and the Michigan Chapter of the ALSA.

Research – Professor Larsen's scholarly work is highly interdisciplinary and collaborative. It creatively and rigorously addresses complex environmental and social problems at the intersection of the disciplines of urban and regional planning and landscape architecture. Her research centers on relationships among land use patterns, built urban forms, and environmental impacts, particularly in the context of social and

environmental justice. The main themes that she pursues include: issues of inequity in the distribution of environmental hazards and natural resources; the ways that efforts to shape urban spaces have manipulated landscapes (often with negative consequences for natural systems); and community responses to the inequities and impacts. Within these broader themes, Professor Larsen, as principal investigator, has produced a rich description and explanation of the historical evolution of the landscape forms of Phoenix, Arizona, focusing on the relationships between social-cultural dynamics and natural systems. She has also focused as a collaborating investigator on several emerging issues in landscape planning and urban design, including the phenomena of urban heat islands and freshwater supplies in arid regions of the U.S. as they relate to the socio-economic status of urban residents and resource users.

Her work is both compelling and significant and Professor Larsen's research program evinces three distinct attributes: (a) it is highly interdisciplinary, (b) it is remarkably collaborative, and (c) it is innovative. Her own academic and professional training has been interdisciplinary, comprising degrees in applied natural science, landscape architecture (with a strong design emphasis), and urban and regional planning (with a strong social science emphasis). Drawing from that training and her subsequent consulting experience, Professor Larsen has developed a research agenda that does not reside at the core of any one of these disciplines, but rather at the intersections among them.

She has had success in obtaining funding support for her research. She was the principal investigator on a \$100,000 grant from the National Science Foundation that supported multi-disciplinary research on human-climate interactions in Arizona. While at Michigan, she has received four additional external grants totaling \$67,000, as well as numerous internal grants from a variety of UM sources. While her funding at UM has been more modest than her initial NSF grant, given the quality of Professor Larsen's research and prior success with NSF, she has considerable potential to generate larger grants from external sources.

One consequence of the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of Professor Larsen's work is a predominance of joint-authored publications, a natural outcome of the interdisciplinary nature of the questions Professor Larsen asks and the collaborative approach she has taken. Professor Larsen has published fifteen peer-reviewed journal articles, six as lead author. Thirteen of these (including five as lead author) were published since her arrival at the University of Michigan in 2002. She currently has an additional sole-authored manuscript submission under review. Her record is strong both in terms of the number of publications and the quality of venues, with peer-reviewed articles appearing in the top tier journals of both the planning and landscape architecture disciplines (e.g., *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, *Landscape Ecology*). In addition, she has published several encyclopedia entries and book reviews in peer-reviewed journals, as well as short publications in professional journals, including a piece in *Planning*, the primary professional magazine for urban and regional planners in America.

Finally, Professor Larsen has proposed a publication drawing upon the findings of a student Capstone project she directed in 2009 addressing community-based, sustainable food programs. Her proposal to co-edit this volume of essays with former student Stephanie Etkin has been favorably reviewed by a senior editor at Island Press.

Recent and Significant Works:

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| 2009 | Sharon L. Harlan, Scott T. Yabiku, Larissa Larsen, and Anthony J. Brazel "Household Water Consumption in an Arid City: Affluence, Affordance, and Attitudes", <i>Society and Natural Resources</i> , Volume 22: 691-709 |
| 2008 | Harlan, S.L., Brazel, A.J., Jenerette, G.D., Jones, N.*, Larsen, L., Preshad, L.*, Stefanov, W.L. "In the Shade of Affluence: The Inequitable Distribution of the Urban Heat |

- Island”, *Research in Social Problems and Public Policy*, Equity and the Environment, Volume 15:173-202
- 2007 Larsen, L. and Alameddine, D*. “The Evolution of Early Phoenix: Valley Business Elite, Land Speculation, and the Emergence of Planning”, *The Journal of Planning History* 6(2):87-113
- 2007 Gee, Gilbert C., Lively, Kathryn J., Larsen, Larissa, Keith*, Jennifer, Stone*, Jana, & MacLeod*, Kara. “Hungry for Respect: Discrimination Among Adults Using Emergency Food Services”, *Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice*, Volume 2, Number 1, pp. 1-20
- 2007 Taylor, J. J.*, Brown, D.G., and Larsen, L. “Preserving natural features: A GIS-based evaluation of a local open-space ordinance”, *Landscape and Urban Planning* 82: 1-16
- 2007 Jenerette, G.D., Harlan, S., Brazel, A., Jones, N. *, Larsen, L., and Stefanov, W. L. (2007) “Regional relationships between surface temperature, vegetation, and human settlement in a rapidly urbanizing ecosystem”, *Landscape Ecology*, 22: 353-365
- 2006 Jenerette, G.D., and Larsen, L. “A global perspective on changing sustainable urban water supplies,” *Global and Planetary Change*, Vol. 50, 202-211
- 2006 Larsen, L., and Harlan, S. “Desert Dreamscapes: Landscape Preference and Landscape Behavior”, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, Vol 78: 85-100
- 2006 Larsen, L. and Swanbrow, L.** “Postcards of Phoenix: Images of Desert Ambivalence and Homogeneity”, *Landscape Journal* 25(2): 205-217
- 2006 Harlan, S. L., Brazil, A.J., Prashad, L.*, Stefanov, W. and Larsen, L. “Neighborhood Microclimates and Vulnerability to Heat Stress”, *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 63: 2847-2863
- 2006 Kirby, A.; Harlan, S.L.; Larsen, L.; Hackett, E.; Bolin, B.; Nelson, A.; Rex, T.; and Wolf, S. “Examining the Significance of Housing Enclaves in the Metropolitan United States of America”, *Housing Theory and Society*, Vol 23, Number 1, 19-33
- 2004 Larsen, L., Harlan, S., Bolin, B., Hackett, E., Hope, D., Kirby, A., Nelson, A., Rex, T., and Wolf, S. “Bonding and Bridging: Understanding the Relationship Between Social Capital and Civic Action,” *The Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 24: 64-77
- 2004 Larsen, L., Poortinga, E., and Hurdle, D. (2004) “Sleeping Rough: Differences Between Shelter Users and Non-Users in Phoenix,” *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 36, Number 4, pp. 578-591

Service – Professor Larsen has made substantial contributions to the university, the community, and the planning profession, often doing so in ways that reflect her commitment to pedagogy as well as incorporating her teaching, research and practice into real-life settings. She coordinates the Physical Planning and Urban Design Concentration for the URP Program. She has also served on multiple faculty committees at the program and college level, as well as serving on a faculty advisory committee for the UM Program in the Environment. She currently serves as the faculty liaison to the URP Student Planning Organization. Finally, Professor Larsen has provided exceptional service to the program through student advising and serving as the faculty advisor to an unusually large number of professional projects and theses. She has also contributed to public service through a number of venues, including providing *pro bono* professional work for a local parks and recreation department and a local elementary school, as well as providing extensive technical advice and service to two different local government task forces and two nonprofit public interest groups.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “Overall she strikes me as a very engaged scholar and planning academician, a very productive individual, and someone tackling interesting and sometimes very challenging research questions, very often employing quite novel methods and techniques.”

Reviewer B: "In sum, I consider Dr. Larsen's overall record in research, teaching and translating scholarship to practice to be worthy of tenure with promotion at UM. I consider the standards at a top-tier university like UM to be at the highest levels. Her record meets these standards."

Reviewer C: "[Larsen's service record] shows important engagement with the profession, with community problems, and a commitment to the university and bodes well for her future contributions to the department and the field."

Reviewer D: "A striking feature of Professor Larsen's work is the extent of her collaboration with colleagues and students. By its nature, environmental planning draws on the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the design disciplines. Professor Larsen recognizes this and works closely with specialists from outside her own field to produce research with a breadth and a depth of analysis that would not otherwise have been possible."

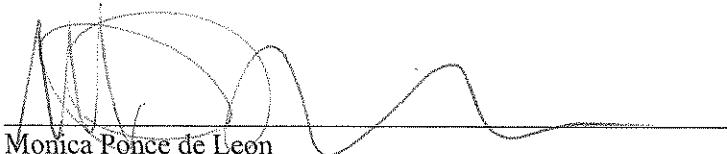
Reviewer E: "[I am] particularly impressed with [her] ability to engage the natural sciences and social sciences ... [as evidenced] through her collaborations, the multi-disciplinary research projects, and variety of publications."

Reviewer F: "[T]he fact that she has worked with several different research teams on distinctly different topics ... suggests that Dr. Larsen is widely recognized as a valuable colleague... [and] will no doubt continue to be a sought after collaborator on research with prospects for substantial grant funding."

Reviewer G: "In summary, Larissa Larsen is an outstanding young scholar with a bright future. She has clear goals for future research on significant topics. My overall assessment is very positive."

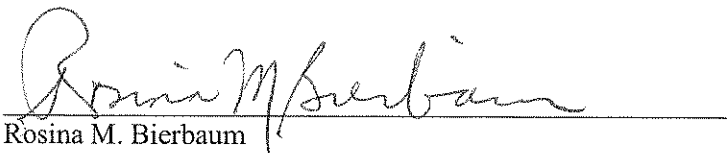
Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Larsen has pursued a focused and coherent research agenda that has resulted in significant theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions to the field of urban and regional planning. She has a strong record of acquiring research funding from diverse sources, and she has made significant contributions to the profession in her scholarly work and her service activities. She is an exceptional instructor who teaches in critical areas in the curriculum in the Urban and Regional Planning Program. These factors merit her promotion. It is with the unanimous support of our Promotion and Tenure Committees and the Executive Committees that we recommend her promotion to associate professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, and associate professor of landscape architecture, without tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment.



Monica Ponce de León

Dean and Eliel Saarinen Collegiate Professor of Architecture and Urban Planning
A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning



Rosina M. Bierbaum
Dean, School of Natural Resources and Environment