

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

David J. Harding, assistant professor of sociology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of sociology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts [Also being promoted to research associate professor, Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research.]

Academic Degrees:

|      |       |                      |
|------|-------|----------------------|
| 2005 | Ph.D. | Harvard University   |
| 2002 | M.A.  | Harvard University   |
| 1998 | B.A.  | Princeton University |

Professional Record:

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|----------------|--|
| 2009 – present | Research Assistant Professor, Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan |
| 2006 – present | Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Michigan   |
| 2006 – 2009    | Assistant Research Scientist, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan                                |
| 2005 – 2006    | NICHD Postdoctoral Fellow, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan                                   |

Summary of Evaluations:

Teaching – Professor Harding has taught some of the department's most demanding service courses and has earned evaluations that are at or above the average for other instructors of those same classes. Students consistently praise his brilliance, dedication, empathy, and pedagogical creativity, all of which he has harnessed most effectively to enhance his teaching. The same qualities that have led to his success in the classroom have also made him a highly valued mentor to a dozen graduate students on whose dissertation committees he serves, in addition to supervising eighteen undergraduates who have been incorporated into his various research projects.

Research – Professor Harding was the most sought after junior candidate when he entered the market in 2005 and his record of scholarly productivity is exceptionally strong. He is the author of an outstanding ethnographic study, forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press, that promises to reorient our thinking about the cultural sources of urban poverty. In addition, he has contributed to fourteen peer reviewed articles, fully nine of them as senior or sole author, with four of those appearing in the three most highly regarded journals in the discipline. Barely four years beyond his Ph.D., Professor Harding is a major figure in the broad area urban inequality.

Recent and Significant Publications:

*Living the Drama: Community, Conflict, and Culture among Inner-City Boys*, University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2010.

"Violence, older peers, and the socialization of adolescent boys in disadvantaged neighborhoods," *American Sociological Review*, 74(3), 2009, pp. 445-464.

“Cultural context, sexual behavior, and romantic relationships in disadvantaged neighborhoods,” *American Sociological Review*, 72(3), 2007, pp. 341-364.

“Counterfactual models of neighborhood effects: The effect of neighborhood poverty on high school dropout and teenage pregnancy,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 109(3), 2003, pp. 676-719.

Service – Professor Harding is a conscientious and constructive colleague with an excellent record of service at all levels. He is fair-minded, hard-working and has a deep commitment to serving the “public good” as evidenced by his willingness to pitch in whenever the need arises. This rare and valued combination has made him an extraordinarily valuable colleague in the Department of Sociology, at the Population Studies Center, and in other units across campus and beyond. He is an exemplary academic citizen.

#### External Reviews:

##### Reviewer (A)

“I have learned a lot while reviewing the materials in his file, and find it hard, even impossible, to think of a scholar who has contributed so much in this early career stage, including contributions to theory, methodology, and empirical research in both qualitative and quantitative research traditions. ...Harding’s contributions to the ‘culture of poverty’ debate has the potential to reorient the field by demonstrating how neighborhood effects on behavior and outcomes actually work.”

##### Reviewer (B)

“Harding has been a notably productive – and more important, notably creative and innovative – scholar... There is every reason to assume that he will continue to be so and that he is therefore worthy of promotion.”

##### Reviewer (C)

“...Harding is one of the very best sociologists of his cohort. The tenure decision for Michigan should be a no-brainer, and given that Michigan is a brainy place, I presume he will sail over the bar just as he should.”

##### Reviewer (D)

“...he’s probably the most prominent untenured scholar of inequality in the world. ...the tenure decision would be a slam dunk in my university, and hopefully it will be in your university, too.”

##### Reviewer (E)

“David Harding is among the ablest sociologists of his generation. He has produced a body of interesting research on important topics. He uses quantitative and qualitative methods with sophistication. He publishes refereed articles and books. ...if we were lucky enough to have him here at [my institution], I would vote for him. Every tenure case should be so easy.”

##### Reviewer (F)

“...[*Living the Drama*] constitutes a major step forward in understanding the social dynamics by which growing up in a poor, violent neighborhood gets translated into low levels of educational attainment, joblessness, and early parenthood – the complex of outcomes that Moynihan labeled

the 'tangle of poverty.' Not only will it advance theoretical and empirical understanding of how poverty is perpetuated, it will do a lot to move the discipline away from sterile, unproductive debates about the culture of poverty and blaming the victims."

Reviewer (G)

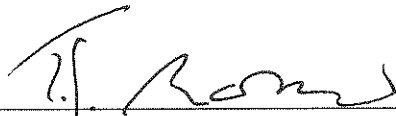
"I have never seen a tenure file as strong as David Harding's. His record is superlative on every dimension: teaching, research, service, and entrepreneurship. ...I would say that Harding is the leading scholar of urban neighborhoods in his generation."

Reviewer (H)

"I am convinced that [*Living the Drama*] will be one of the most important books of the decade on urban sociology."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Harding has been an exceptionally productive and influential scholar, an effective teacher, and an outstanding mentor, as well as a most valued colleague. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor David J. Harding be promoted to the rank of associate professor of sociology, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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Terrence J. McDonald  
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,  
Professor of History and Dean  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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