

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
University of Michigan
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Shobita Parthasarathy, assistant professor of public policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of public policy, with tenure, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

Academic Degrees:

2003	PhD	Cornell University
1999	MA	Cornell University
1994	BA	University of Chicago

Professional Record:

2005 – Present	Assistant Professor, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan
2004 - 2005	Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for Society & Genetics and Department of Public Policy, University of California, Los Angeles
2002 - 2004	Postdoctoral Fellow, Science in Human Culture Program and Department of Sociology, Northwestern University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Overall, based on student evaluations, Professor Parthasarathy is clearly one of our better teachers. Her scores have been above average over the past five years for a core course that is quite difficult to teach, and of great importance to our educational program. Professor Parthasarathy is also a very active mentor and advisor for students and post-docs, especially in the context of the Science and Technology program. She has done some short course teaching at other institutions, and she has used her strength in policy engagement to provide opportunities for graduate students to interact with policymakers to analyze science and technology policy challenges.

Research: Professor Parthasarathy has published a book, six articles, and two book chapters. The book is published by MIT Press, arguably the most prestigious press in her field. Professor Parthasarathy's comparative work on genetic medicine is impressive. Her book has been widely reviewed and well received. Her second project, on comparative patent law, is well underway. She has two good publications based on extensive field work that help to flesh out the conceptual development for a projected book. The research record clearly establishes Professor Parthasarathy as a major scholar in the field of Science and Technology Studies as well as Science and Technology Policy.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Books:

Building Genetic Medicine: Breast Cancer, Technology, and the Comparative Politics of Health Care. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (April 2007). [Reviewed in *Technology and Culture* (2009), *Metascience* (2009), *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* (2009), *Sociology of Health and Illness* (2009), *European Journal of Human Genetics* (2008), *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (2008), *BioSocieties* (2008), *American Scientist* (2008), *American Journal of Human Biology* (2007)]

Articles:

- “Breaking the Expertise Barrier: Understanding Activist Challenges to Science and Technology Policy Domains.” *Science & Public Policy*. (Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 355-367.)
- “Architectures of Genetic Medicine: Comparing Genetic Testing for Breast Cancer in the USA and UK.” *Social Studies of Science*. (Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 5-40)
- “Regulating Risk: Defining Genetic Privacy in the US and Britain.” *Science, Technology, and Human Values*. (Vol. 29, No. 3), pp. 332-352.
- “Crisis at the Patent Office: Understanding the Emergence of the Public Patent Movement in the United States.” In *Living Properties: Making Knowledge And Controlling Ownership In The History Of Biology*, edited by Dan Kevles and Jean-Paul Gaudilliere. Berlin: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science.

Policy Engagement: Professor Parthasarathy has had a number of policy engagements, rather more than is typical for one of our faculty coming up for promotion to associate professor. Notably, she was approached by the ACLU to help organize a lawsuit against the Patent Office and Myriad Genetics. Her expertise has been in demand both by governments and NGOs in the U.S. and in Europe. Additionally, her more recent work on geoengineering has led to an engagement with the Government Accountability Office. She has demonstrated this ability in two substantively different areas of work, one in which she was already expert (genetic medicine) and one in which her general expertise in science and technology studies proved to be applicable to a new problem (geoengineering), which in turn has opened up a new line of research.

Service: Professor Parthasarathy’s service record would be strong even if she had not been principally responsible for developing the Science, Technology, and Public Policy Program (STPP) at the University of Michigan. She has lectured in others’ classes and served on a number of university-level committees. She has been active at the national level in science and technology policy and related fields, serves as a member of an editorial review board, reviews manuscripts for several journals, and more. She has also given several talks to lay audiences, in Ann Arbor and elsewhere. Quite simply, she is a good citizen who shares her expertise generously.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “In my professional opinion, Shobita Parthasarathy’s scholarly achievements are outstanding and clearly merit an award of tenure. ...my review of Professor Parthasarathy’s work is quite favorable and I believe she is engaging in truly important and novel research from a unique perspective. She is a bright, careful, intellectually curious, and already respected scholar and I expect her positive trajectory to continue.”

Reviewer B: “Professor Parthasarathy’s research displays a logical and convincing progression. She has taken a single theme from her earlier work, and followed it through into the wider range of policy issues on which it bears. I believe that Shobita Parthasarathy has the intellectual qualities, the track record, and the research commitment, appropriate to a tenured position in a school of public policy.”

Reviewer C: “...I am impressed by the range of contributions she has made – an informative book on a difficult subject, a number of very well crafted papers, her prodigious pattern of getting competitive research grants and awards, and her contributions to public policy understanding and outcomes.I also think Parthasarathy’s profile is one that policy schools need more of, as understanding of scientific complexity is often absent from the various policy and social scientific literatures on medicine.”

Reviewer D: “I recommend that the Ford School promote Dr. Parthasarathy to Associate Professor with tenure... if Dr. Parthasarathy is tenured, the Ford School might be able to build a program of national and international repute, because with very few exceptions, other schools of public policy lack strength in science and technology policy. And the Ford School has a star.”

Reviewer E: "...I have made an exemplary comparison to [junior] scholars of equal quality who have already reached tenured positions, but I would also like to stress that in our context Shobita Parthasarathy would, given her track record, definitely be eligible for tenure. Thus summing up my reflection, I would highly recommend to promote Shobita Parthasarathy to Associate Professor with tenure at the Ford School of Public Policy."

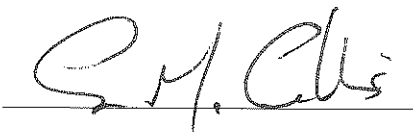
Reviewer F: "I strongly endorse her for tenure at the Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan."

Reviewer G: "Given Shobita's record, there is virtually no chance that she will become boxed in, overly specialized, or unable to develop new and significant intellectual interests relevant to policy problems."

Reviewer H: "Among the half dozen or more STS and science and technology policy scholars of which I know and who have received tenure over the past four or five years, I believe Parthasarathy stands out for her conceptual sophistication, the clarity of her voice, and the likely impact of her scholarship. ... In sum, I have no reluctance in recommending Professor Shobita Parthasarathy for promotion to tenure..."

Reviewer I: "As the founder and co-director of an academic policy center, I would absolutely recommend her for tenure at my own institution, and I remain somewhat envious (in a satisfied sort of way) that you are presented with the opportunity of doing so."

Summary of Recommendation: Shobita Parthasarathy is a valuable member of the Ford School's faculty. She brings an impressive publication record, promising research trajectory, increasingly good teaching, extraordinary policy engagement, and valuable service to the Ford School, the University, and her discipline. She adds an exciting dimension of intellectual diversity to our community, and is a wonderful role model for our students. It is a great pleasure for me to recommend Shobita Parthasarathy for promotion to associate professor of public policy, with tenure, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.



Susan M. Collins
Joan and Sanford Weill Dean of Public Policy
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

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