

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
School of Social Work

Brian E. Perron, assistant professor of social work, School of Social Work, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2007	Mental Health Services Research, Washington University, St. Louis
M.S.	1998	Social Work, University of Wisconsin
B.A.	1995	Psychology, College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN

Professional Record:

2007- present	Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Michigan
2008-2010	Research Scientist, Department of Veterans Affairs
2002-2003	Program Supervisor, Oak Grove Residential Treatment Center, Minneapolis, MN
2000-2002	Clinical Social Worker, Andrew Residence, Minneapolis, MN
1998-1999	Counselor, Student Support Services, College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN

Summary of Evaluation

Teaching: Professor Perron is an exceptional educator, both in the classroom and in his mentoring relationships with M.S.W and Ph.D. students. He has taught courses dealing with mental health and mental disorders. His scores from student evaluations consistently place at or near a perfect 5.0 rating for the first three core questions (I learned a great deal from this course; Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher; and Overall, this was an excellent course). Enthusiastic letters of support from former students attest to his passion and influence as an educator. In 2010, University of Michigan social work students chose him to receive the Advisor of the Year Award for his role as mentor for the Students for Recovery, a program that has gained national attention. It is notable that Professor Perron has been exceptionally active in bringing graduate students into his research program, including Masters and Ph.D. students—from the School of Social Work, as well as other University units—as co-authors in numerous publications. Professor Perron's commitment to teaching is reflected in his pursuit of a Master's degree in instructional media and technology while teaching at the University of Michigan. He has integrated these technologies comprehensively into his teaching, including developing training materials for students in their use.

Research/scholarship: Professor Perron is widely recognized for his scholarly contributions to the knowledge base and epidemiology of substance abuse. He has worked with a number of colleagues, and subsequently served as lead author or co-author on 79 papers published in high-impact journals of interest to multiple and varied disciplines. His leadership in much of this research is evidenced by being the lead author for 29 of these articles. In addition, he is first author for six book chapters and co-author for eight others, and has authored or co-authored six entries in encyclopedias. Professor Perron's research examines critically important social work issues, such as inhalant abuse, utilization of social services for substance abuse, and co-morbid medical conditions among individuals who have bi-polar disorders. His research in these areas is guided by the goals of developing better treatment and prevention programs for these at-risk populations. Although inhalant abuse is a critically important social problem and social work issue, there has been comparatively little research on this topic, and the research that previously existed was based on ethnographic studies and clinical samples. Professor Perron's research in this area has introduced several major innovations. First, he has written some of the earliest papers in this area using data from the National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions and Missouri's

Division of Youth, a national probability sample. Second, he conducted the first study on the transition from inhalant use to inhalant abuse and inhalant disorder (i.e., the transition from casual use to addiction). Third, he has pursued the first methodological studies investigating the diagnostic validity of inhalant use disorders. Fourth, he has written a series of papers examining mental health co-morbidities of inhalant use. This work indicates that inhalant abusers had a higher likelihood of depression and suicidality, as well as having other alcohol and drug addictions. Finally, he has conducted one of the most comprehensive investigations of asthma inhalant misuse.

Professor Perron's influence in the field of substance abuse and related disorders is seen in the quantity, as well as quality of his publications in well-respected, top-tier peer-reviewed journals. For example, Professor Perron is the lead author on four articles and co-author on five others published in *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* (Impact Factor 3.599). His work also appears in journals serving multiple and varied disciplines and professions, such as the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* (5.218), *Journal of Psychiatric Research* (3.732), *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* (2.052), *Social Science and Medicine* (2.710), *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention and Policy* (1.246), and *Research on Social Work Practice* (0.294). The appearance of Professor Perron's work in these multi-disciplinary journals is evidence of his contribution across multiple professions and disciplines that serve substance abuse populations, and examine abuse-related disorders. It also reflects his ability to develop collaborative research with established investigators across multiple fields of study.

Further evidence of Professor Perron's impact and recognition in the field is seen in his record of past and present grant support as well as his pending applications for federal grants. He is currently the principal investigator for two federally-funded grants through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health. In addition, he was a co-investigator for two past NIH funded projects that have served as the basis for many of his published articles. While still pursuing his doctorate, Professor Perron was the recipient of an individual NIH pre-doctoral award (F31). He is currently principal investigator on two and co-investigator on one pending investigator-initiated federal grant applications currently under review by the NIH. These projects attest to the fact that Professor Perron has established himself as a recognized expert, leader, and mentor in the field of mental health and substance disorders.

#### Recent and Significant Publications:

- Perron, B. E., Bohnert, A. S., Vaughn, M. G., Bauer, M. S., & Kilbourne, A. M. (in press). Profiles of disability among adults with bipolar spectrum disorders. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*.
- Perron, B. E., Fries, L. E., Kilbourne, A. M., Vaughn, M. G., & Bauer, M. S. (2010). Racial/ethnic group differences in bipolar symptomatology in a community sample of persons with bipolar I disorder. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 198(1), 16-21.
- Perron, B. E., Alexander-Eitzman, B., Watkins, D., Taylor, R. J., Baser, R., Neighbors, H. W., & Jackson, J.S. (2009). Ethnic differences in delays to treatment for substance use disorders: African Americans, Black Caribbeans and Non-Hispanic Whites. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 41(4), 369-77.
- Perron, B. E., Howard, M. O., Nienhuis, J. K., Bauer, M., Woodward, A., & Kilbourne, A. M. (2009). Prevalence and burden of general medical conditions among adults with bipolar-I disorder. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 70(10), 1407-1415.
- Perron, B. E., & Howard, M. O. (2009). Adolescent inhalant use, abuse, and dependence. *Addiction*, 104(7), 1185-1192.
- Perron, B. E., Jarman, C., & Kilbourne, A. M. (2009). Access to conventional mental health and medical care among users of complementary and alternative medicine with bipolar disorder. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 197(4), 287-290.
- Perron, B. E., Howard, M. O., Nienhuis, J. K., Bauer, M., Woodward, A., & Kilbourne, A. M.

- (2009). Prevalence and burden of general medical conditions among adults with bipolar-I disorder. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 70(10), 1407-1415.
- Perron, B. E., Howard, M. O., Maitra, S., & Vaughn, M. G. (2009). Prevalence, timing, and predictors of transitions from inhalant use to inhalant use disorders. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 100(3), 277-284.
- Perron, B. E., & Howard, M. O. (2008). The prevalence and correlates of closed-head trauma among incarcerated adolescents. *Criminal Behavior and Mental Health*, 18(4), 243-255.
- Perron, B.E., & Howard, M. O. (2008). Endemic asthma inhaler misuse and abuse among antisocial adolescents. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 96(1-2), 22-29.
- Perron, B. E., & Bright, C. (2008). The influence of legal coercion on treatment retention in substance abuse treatment: Results from a national survey. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 92(1-3), 123-131.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Professor Perron is one of the most talented and ambitious [junior] scholars to complete the PhD in social work in recent years, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to review his work. I became aware of his work originally while he was a doctoral student at Washington University School of Social Work when we determined we were both analyzing the same data set ... The strength of this case rests on Perron's extraordinary productivity in the three years he has been at Michigan: 87 scholarly papers, several funded NIH projects, several published collaborations with MSW students as well as faculty colleagues at Michigan and elsewhere as well as strong course evaluations and cutting edge work on the use of technology in the classroom and in the field."

Reviewer B: "In summary, I believe both the number and quality of Perron's publications are quite competitive among his peers nationally. His contributions in his area of expertise and the sophistication of his research methods indicate a high level of scientific merit. One would expect that this merit will result in a higher level of external funding in the near future, as in this area his accomplishments are only adequate. Finally I would recommend Dr. Perron for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure at our school, and believe he should receive this promotion at the University of Michigan."

Reviewer C: "Overall, Dr. Perron's research and scholarly activities are uniformly of very high quality and are especially significant contributions at the forefront of theory and applied work in the field of mental health services research. He is clearly an unusually creative, productive, and innovative leader who has substantial impact on research and clinical practice in his areas of expertise. These accomplishments, and the integrated set of planned activities he has outlined, are highly likely to ensure Dr. Perron's further development as a leading expert and contributor to the field. Accordingly, I support with high enthusiasm his promotion to Associate Professor with tenure at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. I believe that he would merit such a promotion at any of the leading University-based Schools of Social Work in the country."

Reviewer D: "Frankly, this is one of the easiest letters I have ever written for P&T, since his record of research and publications are so outstanding for a rather new academic. In fact, I was very impressed with the quality and quantity of his work, and later realized that this prodigious output has all been accomplished since 2007....he is outstanding...He would be promoted with tenure here at [my institution]."

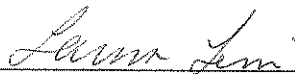
Reviewer E: "... Dr. Perron's standing in inhalant epidemiology research is at the very top tier among his peer cohort on a national basis. I am not aware of any other researcher who has been working in his area of specialty for a similar length of time who has achieved his remarkable level of productivity. His scholarly work outside his primary specialty area of focus is of high quality and provides indication of

strong promise for an exceptional research career in the broader substance abuse arenas and in social work research generally.”

Reviewer F: “Dr. Perron’s work on the latter phenomenon, based on analyzing the latent structure of inhalant use disorders, is groundbreaking...his scholarship is noteworthy for its important advancements in understanding, classifying, and developing valid diagnostic and intervention concepts in a field that had greatly needed this leadership... There is every reason to believe that he would be promoted and granted tenure if he were a member of [my institution] Social Work faculty.”

Reviewer G: “...a dazzling portfolio that presents a record of research, teaching, and service that is unparalleled by any prior junior faculty member that I have reviewed for promotion internally or externally (including those with a full six years under their belts!). His productivity is exceptional and he would easily qualify for tenure at any of this nation’s top ranked research universities...this portfolio leaves the strong impression that he is on a trajectory to become a leading substance abuse researcher and a renowned social work educator... I give him the highest possible recommendation for promotion.”

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Perron is a very productive social work scholar and teacher, who has made important contributions to understanding substance abuse and its significant life-altering and life-threatening implications. He is an award-winning teacher and mentor. His student evaluations are outstanding across all courses he has taught. His service to the University and the community beyond is notable, as evidenced by the appreciation expressed by his colleagues, students, and members of the community. Accordingly, I join the Tenure and Promotion and Executive Committees’ of the School of Social Work unanimous support in recommending Brian E. Perron for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.



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Laura Lein  
Katherine Reebel Collegiate Professor of Social Work,  
Professor of Anthropology, and Dean  
School of Social Work

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