

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Social Work

Michael C. Spencer, associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work, is recommended for promotion to professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1996	Social Welfare, University of Washington
M.S.S.W.	1992	University of Texas, Austin, TX
B.A.	1988	Psychology, University of Hawaii

Professional Record:

2010–present	Associate Dean for Educational Programs, University of Michigan, School of Social Work
2003–present	Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of Michigan
2008–present	Faculty Associate, Program in the Environment, University of Michigan
2004–present	Faculty Affiliate, National Poverty Center, University of Michigan, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
1998–present	Faculty Associate, Program in American Culture, University of Michigan
1997–2007	Faculty Affiliate, National Institute of Mental Health Research Center on Poverty, Risk and Mental Health, University of Michigan
1997–2003	Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Michigan
1996–1997	Postdoctoral Research Associate, National Institute of Mental Health, Social Work Research Development Center on Poverty, Risk and Mental Health, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation

Teaching: Professor Spencer is a committed and highly successful educator, consistently placed among the top quarter of faculty by student evaluations. He has taught broadly across the School's curriculum, including core foundation and community practice courses, the School's undergraduate course and a course he developed on dialogue facilitation, a practice developed and refined in the course of his research. Professor Spencer has been a pioneer in the classroom use of intergroup dialogues on cultural diversity and social justice, and received a Whitaker Award from CRLT to develop and evaluate the dialogue facilitation class. Professor Spencer is also actively engaged in doctoral education. He has worked with students at every stage of their doctoral education, and has served on over thirty dissertation committees within and outside of our doctoral program. He is an active mentor for students in our Ph.D. program and works closely with them on research projects.

Research/scholarship: Professor Spencer's research focuses on disparities in health, mental health and economic well-being, with a concentration on communities of color. His work contributes both to an analysis of the phenomena of disparities, as well as the translation of research findings into real-world applications, in the university setting, in clinical practice, and in a range of other settings. His scholarship in this area has been recognized in national and international arenas, as evidenced by the quality of the journals in which he is published, citations of his work, his grant support, and invitations he has received to share his knowledge and participate in the development of new scholars. Since receiving his Ph.D. in 1996, Professor Spencer has been very productive. His curriculum vitae lists 38 articles published or in

press in peer-reviewed journals and nine book chapters. The majority of his peer-reviewed publications (61%) were published after promotion to associate professor in 2003. Professor Spencer is a collaborative scholar who has co-authored all of his publications, being first author on well over 1/3. His co-authorship reflects his commitment to inter- and multidisciplinary scholarship, and his commitment to involving and mentoring emerging scholars. His co-authors have included scholars from social work and related health and behavioral science fields, as well as graduate and undergraduate students. Many of his co-authors are students and post-doctoral scholars whom he has also mentored. Professor Spencer's most significant scholarly contributions have been in the fields of health disparities and the use of community-based participatory methods for health promotion. His work on health disparities has taken an ecological approach, often using logistic regression to identify how micro-, meso-, and macro-level variables affect health outcomes or service. He is one of a handful of scholars who is looking at health disparities in Asian-American populations. This line of research has examined how individual factors, such as language and attitudes toward formal services intersect with social structural factors, such as geography and access to insurance coverage, to differentially affect access to care. His work using community-based participatory research to study means to reduce the impact of diabetes on communities of color is particularly significant. This program of research has engaged local service providers in two neighborhoods in Detroit in a large-scale, ongoing, study that simultaneously focuses on basic and intervention research. His most recently funded research on this project involves a community-based randomized trial to assess the efficacy of a community health worker intervention to reduce the severity of diabetes and to improve health-related behaviors. This study is ground-breaking, both in its methods, and in its positive results. It has showcased Professor's Spencer's approach to in addressing a significant chronic illness that disproportionally affects communities of color. Professor Spencer's record of grant support is further evidence of Professor Spencer's impact and recognition in the He has been very successful throughout his career in securing both internal and external research funding. His most significant grant awards have been associated with his community-based participatory research in Detroit with the CDC funded REACH partnership. Other sources include the NIH, the U.S. Department of Education, SAMHSA, NIMH, and the State of Michigan, among others.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- Spencer, M. S., Rosland, A., Kieffer, E. C., Pamisano, G., Sinco, B., Anderson, M., Graddy- Dansby, G., Guzman, J. R., & Heisler, M. E. Effectiveness of a randomized community health worker intervention among African Americans and Latinos with diabetes. *American Journal of Public Health*.
- Spencer, M. S., Chen, J., Gee, G. C., Fabian, C. G., & Takeuchi, D. T. (in press.) Discrimination and mental health service use in a national study of Asian Americans. *American Journal of Public Health*.
- Chen, J., Gee, G., Spencer, M. S., Danziger, S., & Takeuchi, D. T. (2009). Perceived social Standing among Asian immigrants in the U.S.: Do reasons for immigration matter? *Social Science Research*, 38, 858-869.
- Spencer, M. S., Brown, M., Griffin, S., & Abdullah, S. (2008). Outcome evaluation of the Intergroup project. *Small Group Research*, 39, 82-103.
- Spencer, M. S., Kieffer, E. C., Sinco, B. R., Palmisano, G., Guzman, R., James, S. A., Graddy-Dansby, G., Two Feathers, J., & Heisler, M. E. (2006). Emotional distress and diabetes among African Americans and Latinos. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 18, 88-105.
- Heisler, M., Spencer, M., Palmisano, G., Forman, J., Graddy-Dansby, G., & Kieffer, E. C. (2009). Participants' assessment of the effects of a community health worker intervention on their diabetes self-management and interactions with health care providers. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 36, S270-279.

Gee, G., Spencer, M. S., Chen, J., & Takeuchi, D. T. (2007). The association between perceived discrimination and DSM-IV mental health disorders: A nationally representative study of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. *Social Science and Medicine*, 64, 1984-1996.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Dr. Spencer has emerged as one of the premier scholars in the field of social work research on Asian and Pacific Islanders. With a special interest in oppressed populations and issues of mental health, Dr. Spencer has engaged in seminal work related to discrimination, and access and cultural appropriateness of human service programs. He has pioneered the application of approaches such as community based participatory research....Very few scholars of his [generation] and rank can compare favorably to Dr. Spencer in terms of publication record and other scholarly achievements...Dr. Spencer's involvement in the National Latino and Asian American Study ... was significant in terms of examining racial discrimination in relation to risk of mental health disorders. Manuscripts drawn from this research would appear on my personal list of the most significant publications in social work research...."

Reviewer B: "His scholarship is theory-driven, interdisciplinary and collaborative.... Dr. Spencer's application of research to real-world settings through the design and implementation of intervention research studies is singularly significant...In terms of quantity and focused area of scholarship, Dr. Spencer's contributions are impressive when compared to other social work academics at a similar stage in their careers...One article that stands head and shoulders above all others in terms of its widespread influence is Dr. Spencer's guest editorial in *Social Work*...I believe it should be required reading for all students and faculty in schools of social work."

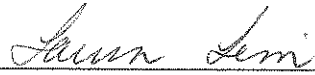
Reviewer C: "Dr. Spencer is well respected in his field and certainly has achieved more than most of his peers in a similar point in their careers...Dr. Spencer's publications and research are outstanding."

Reviewer D: "He has become known nationally for his work in health disparities, both within and outside social work. I would say that he stands among the top two or three social work scholars working in the field of health disparities...He is recognized for the integrity of his work and adherence to the principles of community-based participatory research...He has a broadly established reputation and has made an impact on the field. He is known for the level of his scholarship, as well as his humility, willingness to contribute to the profession, and consistent goal of improving the health and mental health of vulnerable populations...He can be counted on to tackle the most pressing and difficult questions using the best of methods."

Reviewer E: "[Professor Spencer] is a talented researcher whose facility with a range of methodologies from community-based participatory action research to random clinical trials is a rare and valuable characteristic in one researcher. The impact of his research has been far-reaching, influencing the fields of public and community health, mental health, medicine, education, psychology, and African American Studies."

Reviewer F: "A review of his academic experience, successful publication record, grant support and dedication to work on equality in social justice make him a well deserving candidate for this Role...Dr. Spencer shows a thoughtful, rigorous approach, in which he looks critically at limitations in his findings and offers explanations and suggestions that can be of much use to the field. This shows the character of a true scholar."

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Spencer is a very productive scholar, an excellent teacher, and an exceptional colleague. He is nationally and internationally recognized for his research, which addresses areas of critical importance to the field of social work. Accordingly, I join the Tenure and Promotion and Executive Committees' of the School of Social Work unanimous support in recommending Michael C. Spencer for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Laura Lein", positioned above a horizontal line.

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

May 2011