

Promotion Recommendation
The University of Michigan
School of Natural Resources and Environment

Dorceta E. Taylor, associate professor of environmental sociology, with tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment, is recommended for promotion to professor of environmental sociology, with tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1991	Yale University, Environmental Sociology, New Haven, CT
M.A.	1988	Yale University, Sociology/Forestry, New Haven, CT
M.Phil.	1988	Yale University, Sociology/Forestry, New Haven, CT
M.F.S.	1985	Yale University, Forest Science, New Haven, CT
B.A.	1983	Northeastern Illinois University, Environmental Studies, Chicago, IL

Professional Record:

2002 to present	Associate Professor, with tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan
2002 to 2010	Associate Professor, without tenure, Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, University of Michigan
1998 to 2002	Assistant Professor, School of Natural Resources and Environment and Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, University of Michigan
1995 to 1998	Assistant Professor of Environmental Sociology, Washington State University, Vancouver, WA
1993 to 1995	Assistant Professor, School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan
1992 to 1993	Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Taylor's teaching portfolio shows great willingness to offer a variety of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Whether large courses, such as Environment and Inequality (NRE 336/CAAS 332) which attracted as many as 150 students when it was last offered in 2006, or small courses with a field component permitting students to travel to the Caribbean or Brazil, her diverse course offerings focus on environmental justice and issues of poverty and inequality, from a historic, political, and sociological perspective. CRLT course evaluations (for courses with enrollments greater than 10) are generally in the top quartile for course excellence. Students tend to be particularly positive about their gained understanding of the concepts and principles in the fields covered. Many of Professor Taylor's courses are rated as being heavy in terms of workload.

Professor Taylor has also had considerable involvement with doctoral committees and as advisor to Master's students. She has served as mentor to numerous graduate students and has provided opportunities for many of them to participate in conferences that she organized. Professor Taylor's efforts to engage undergraduates in research opportunities are particularly noteworthy: she has hired twelve students, supervised an Honors thesis and six Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) students and included undergraduates as participants in several conferences.

Research: Professor Taylor has cut out a unique niche in environmental sociology. As one of the most important scholars who focus on environmental justice as a movement, her pioneering work has adroitly traced the centuries-long antecedents of injustices related to environmental, labor and social movements while also documenting the contributions of people of color, and specially African Americans, in the environmental movement and the environmental professions. Her work also examines the class and gender dimensions of environmentalism and places them within the environmental justice framework. Many of these themes are illuminated in her ground-breaking recent book, *The Environment and the People in American Cities: 1600-1900. Disorder, Inequality and Social Change*, (Duke University Press, 2009) which received the Allan Schnaiberg Outstanding Publication Award from the Environment and Technology Section of the American Sociological Association (ASA). Professor Taylor has been very successful in securing funds for her research and service efforts totaling more than \$1.3 million, including three NSF grants.

Recent Significant Publications:

- Taylor, D. E. (in press) "Racial and Gender Differences in Job Mobility and Wages of Employees in Environmental Organizations." *Environmental Practice*.
- Taylor, D. E. (Ed.) (2010) *Environment and Social Justice: An International Perspective (Research in Social Problems and Public Policy, Vol. 18)*. Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.
- Taylor, D. E. (2009) *The Environment and the People in American Cities: 1600s-1900s. Disorder, Inequality and Social Change*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Taylor, D. E. (2008) "Diversity and the Environment: Myth-making and the Status of Minorities in the Field." In T. I. K. Youn (Ed.) *Equity and the Environment (Research in Social Problems and Public Policy, Volume 15)*. Emerald Group Publishing Ltd., pp.89-147.
- Taylor, D. E. (2007) "Employment Preferences and Salary Expectations of Students in Science and Engineering," *BioScience*. 57(2):175-185.
- Taylor, D. E. (2007) "Diversity and Equity in Environmental Organizations: The Salience of These Factors to Students." *Journal of Environmental Education*, 39(1):19-43.
- Taylor, D. E. (2000) "The Rise of the Environmental Justice Paradigm: Injustice Framing and the Social Construction of Environmental Discourses." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43(4): 508-580.

Service: Professor Taylor has been an active contributor within the University (e.g., search committees and the advisory council of the National Center for Institutional Diversity) as well as in a variety of professional roles (e.g., board member of the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation and the Editorial Review Board of *Environmental Practice*). Most notably, she founded and received substantial funding from the Noyes and Ford Foundations for the Multicultural Environmental Leadership Initiative (MELDI) which aims to increase diversity in environmental organizations, the environmental fields in academia, and the broader environmental movement. Through MELDI, Professor Taylor enhanced minority recruitment efforts, increased visibility of environmental justice by organizing several campus conferences, brought numerous speakers to campus, and provided students the opportunities to present their work.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Dorceta has developed into one of the most influential scholars in environmental sociology, specifically focused around broadly conceived notions of environmental justice."

Reviewer B: "In environmental sociology, Professor Taylor has been especially important as a leader in developing the important and growing field of environmental justice."

Reviewer C: “I would rate her in the top five academics whose work has been successful in building, impacting, and growing [multiple] interdisciplinary fields.”

Reviewer D: “This is one of the best profiles of the environmental justice movement I have read and one of the clearest expositions of the variants of social movement theory I have seen; indeed, it guided the theoretical framing for my recent book It’s the sort of landmark article that all of us hope that we will be able to achieve – and she has.”

Reviewer E: “I would rank Professor Taylor at the top of her field, in terms of stature, visibility, and quality and quantity of her publications.”

Reviewer F: “I believe Dr. Dorceta Taylor [is] breaking extremely important new ground and that her book will become a classic in urban social and environmental history in years to come, if it is not already recognized as such.”

Reviewer G: “The impressiveness of Taylor’s scholarship is her effort to systematically take up and rewrite the history of American cities. I think it is a bold and successful effort to redefine environmentalism and social justice approaches in scholarship and practice.”

Reviewer H: “The interdisciplinary nature of her work has served to build our understanding of the complexities of environmental issues and the necessity of working across boundaries in our efforts to achieve a sustainable society.”

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Taylor is a highly visible environmental sociologist. Her award-winning book has been commended for its “profound insights” and “superbly written *tour de force* on environmental and social justice.” Indeed her work has greatly expanded understanding of the roots and ramifications of the many factors underlying urban inequities. Professor Taylor has been heavily committed to working with students, with particular emphasis on encouraging students of color to engage in research. She founded, successfully secured funding for, and has directed the Multicultural Environmental Leadership Initiative which has served to enhance recruitment, training, and information sharing for students of color. In light of her outstanding contributions the Promotion and Tenure Committee recommends Professor Taylor for promotion to professor of environmental sociology, with tenure, School of Natural Resources and Environment.



Rosina Bierbaum
Dean, School of Natural Resources and Environment

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