

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

Derek R. Peterson, associate professor of history, with tenure, and associate professor of Afroamerican and African studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of history, with tenure, and professor of Afroamerican and African studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2000 University of Minnesota
B.A. 1993 University of Rochester

Professional Record:

2009 – present Associate Professor, Department of History and Department of Afroamerican and African Studies (DAAS), University of Michigan
2009 – present Associate Director, African Studies Center, University of Michigan
2009 – present Research Associate, Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge
2007 – 2009 Senior Lecturer, Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge
2005 – 2009 Director, Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge
2004 – 2009 Fellow and Director of Studies in History, Selwyn College, University of Cambridge
2004 – 2007 University Lecturer, Center of African Studies, University of Cambridge
2000 – 2004 Assistant Professor, Department of History, The College of New Jersey

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Peterson contributes to the teaching missions of both DAAS and History. He holds undergraduates to high standards for intensive reading and writing. His teaching and advising at the graduate level has been strong and student evaluations have been positive. He has served on many preliminary and dissertation committees, and supervised six doctoral students. In addition, he has led an initiative to recruit African students to pursue graduate degrees in history and to fund their work, as well as other African studies graduate projects, through the Rackham Graduate School.

Research – Professor Peterson is an interdisciplinary scholar, who works on the historiography of East Africa and African studies, more generally. His current book project, Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival, is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. He has edited or co-edited three volumes of essays, is a member of several editorial boards, and in 2009 he founded the Cambridge Center of African Studies Series at the Ohio University Press. Digging down in to the archives and historiographies of Uganda and Tanzania, he helps build and sustain the infrastructure crucial to historical knowledge through his retrieval, organization, and preservation of archival materials throughout the region.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A Social History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972,
Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2012.

Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa and the Atlantic, edited volume, Ohio University Press, 2010.

Recasting the Past: History Writing and Political Work in Modern Africa, co-edited with G. Macola, Ohio University Press, 2009.

Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya, Heinemann, 2004.

Service – Professor Peterson has taken service roles in the African Studies Center (ASC), History, and DAAS. He will begin a term as director of the ASC in fall 2012. He has been actively involved in student recruitment, increasing the number of students in History's graduate program.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Creative Writing is a landmark book; there is nothing like it in East African colonial historiography. ... Peterson has looked at how Gikuyu people actually wrote, read, translated, interpreted and appropriated texts. ... His new book on the East African revival movement... widens the canvas to a whole region, and looks at case studies from ethnic-linguistic communities in Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and the central African borderlands.”

Reviewer (B)

“Derek has a gift for weaving quite complex theoretical issues... seamlessly into highly textured local level studies rich in ethnographic and historical documentation. ... Historians of Africa have tended to focus on particular ethnic groups, particular nations, or particular institutions. It took someone with the imagination and boldness of Derek to set aside those conventions and take up the study of an entire region, finding the interplay between ideas in one area and those across often arbitrary colonial borders.”

Reviewer (C)

“In addition to the monographs and articles, he has edited or co-edited several volumes of articles. Of the latter, at least two are major contributions to the field. ... in terms of productivity, visibility, and the respect his scholarship commands across three continents, Derek Peterson is a major figure in our field.”

Reviewer (D)

“... Peterson is without doubt one of the top African Historians [of his generation] in the world. He is certainly the leading historian of Kenya and Uganda... His linguistic ability... and his training... have made him a scholar who writes from a truly African perspective. This focus... was a central element of his first monograph but is even stronger in his more recent work... This work provides a particularly important corrective to those who see African ethnicities as the product of European intervention.”

Reviewer (E)

“The heart of Prof Peterson's work is in East Africa but [he]... has also written convincingly on slavery, imperial history, religion in empire, and gender. His knowledge of the historiographies

of west and southern Africa is substantial. This reach is matched by a methodological richness that characterizes all his work..."

Reviewer (F)

"...Peterson has emerged as one of the most significant living historians of East Africa and he is well on the way to becoming a respected and widely recognized authority on Africa *tout court*. ...[he] shows every sign of sustaining a very aggressive and broadly conceived research program. ...he clearly merits promotion to Full Professor on the basis of his work to this point."

Reviewer (G)

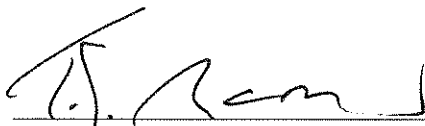
"I enjoyed reading Dr Peterson's forthcoming monograph *The Pilgrims' Politics*. It is a *tour de force* and will be a very important book . . . He has written a regional history in a field still dominated by the bounded national history or the micro-history. . . Peterson has completed the Herculean feat of conducting in-depth research in three African countries, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda."

Reviewer (H)

"Peterson is first-rate, a description I do not bestow on many people. His scholarship is original and pathbreaking...he is a diligent colleague and advocate of his own field. I fully expect him to advance to a position of intellectual and institutional centrality in the field of African studies."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Peterson is an important figure in his research area. He is a serious and challenging teacher, and has a remarkable record of service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Derek R. Peterson be promoted to the rank of professor of history, with tenure, and professor of Afroamerican and African studies, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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