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

William H. Baxter, associate professor of Chinese language and literature, with tenure, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, and associate professor of Chinese linguistics, without tenure, Department of Linguistics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of Chinese language and literature, with tenure, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, and professor of Chinese linguistics, without tenure, Department of Linguistics, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1977	Cornell University
M.A.	1974	Cornell University
B.A.	1970	Amherst College

Professional Record:

1990 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics and Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan
1983 – 1985	Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics and Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan
1982	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Far Eastern Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
1978 – 1983	Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Alabama, Birmingham
1976 – 1978	Part-time Instructor, Department of English, University of Alabama, Birmingham

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Baxter has made important contributions to the curricula in both units and these have been well received. He has created and taught an array of new courses since 2008 when the department shifted away from Chinese language teaching to wider ranging undergraduate courses. His student evaluations are strong and students mention his passion for linguistics and his exceptionally detailed, broad knowledge of the Asian region. Professor Baxter has been a very successful mentor and undergraduate and graduate students alike are unanimously enthusiastic.

Research – Professor Baxter is a leading figure in the reconstruction of historical Chinese phonology and in determining the path from older forms of Chinese to their modern descendants. The focal point of Professor Baxter's post-tenure dossier is his book manuscript, Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction (the current standard work on Old Chinese is his 1992 book, A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology). Amassing and interpreting the relevant evidence has been a monumental undertaking, and the resulting manuscript is a masterful, revised reconstruction that offers important new insights into the structure of Old Chinese.

<u>Recent and Significant Publications</u>:
<u>Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction</u>, with L. Sagart, Oxford University Press, in press.

"Reconstructing the *s- prefix in Old Chinese," with L. Sagart, *Language and Linguistics*, 13(1), 2012, pp. 29–59.
"The Baxter-Sagart Old Chinese Reconstruction," over 4,000 Old Chinese words available on the website of the Centre de Recherches Linguistiques sur l'Asie Orientale, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, Version 1.00, 2011.
"Mandarin dialect phylogeny," *Cahiers de Linguistique Asie Orientale*, 35, 2006, pp. 71–114.

<u>Service</u> – Professor Baxter has served on a wide range of important committees in both his units. He has also been active in the Center for Chinese Studies.

<u>External Reviewers</u>:
Reviewer (A)
"…he has a national and international reputation as a major scholar in the field of Chinese historical linguistics… …his reconstruction (with Laurent Sagart) is generally considered the most accurate and is increasingly used by scholars in the Early China field. …his extremely important forthcoming book should make his status even greater."

Reviewer (B)
"Professor Baxter is certainly the foremost practitioner of Old Chinese reconstruction in North America today. And he and Sagart may be said to be paramount in the Western world in this field… Their work will guide this field for the foreseeable future. …Baxter has been, and continues to be, a highly visible scholar of international renown."

Reviewer (C)
"*Handbook* and *Reconstruction* are both milestone works. … In *Handbook* Bill provided a consolidated and updated foundation for further research. *Reconstruction* represents the continuation of Bill's active program of research, and can also be seen in the light of nearly two decades during which Bill has immersed himself in the newly emerging evidence of pre-Qin manuscripts and paleography. Among currently active scholars of early China, no one else matches his contributions to both historical phonology and text critical research using all available materials."

Reviewer (D)
"His eminence is reflected not only in the fact that *everyone* working with Old Chinese takes his work as the principal reference. It also can be seen from his graduate teaching engagements in Shanghai, Oxford, Leiden, and Paris. … I am fully aware that this evaluation may come across as rather overenthusiastic. Let me assure you that this is not my usual style. In this exceptional case, however, I consider it just right."

Reviewer (E)
"…William Baxter is a truly outstanding, and extremely wide-ranging, scholar in the field of historical linguistics. In both quality and quantity, his publication record is outstanding. I am

happy to give my strongest support for the promotion of William Baxter to the rank of professor."

Reviewer (F)
"This is the treatment of Chinese phonology and morphology that, as a practicing historical linguist, I have often wished existed. ... Reading his publications was an education."
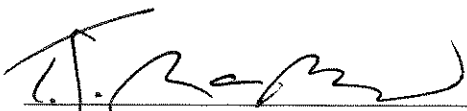
Reviewer (G)
"...[Professor] Baxter is a senior scholar with a high international profile whose work will endure and will be important not only to specialists in Chinese and other historical linguists, but to also to students of Asian history. His work has long been widely cited by scholars in linguistics and in related fields. With the publication of this new reconstruction...I would not be surprised if previous reconstructions of Old Chinese were simply to fall by the wayside."

Reviewer (H)
"What I value most in Baxter's research style is that it is absolutely rational, topically and methodologically innovative and possessed with nuanced sophistication in weighing competing hypotheses; that it is exhaustive in its search for evidence and in its consideration of possible counter evidence. His work is marked by interdisciplinary thinking; he is aware of the factual and methodological advances in science in general; is mathematically and statistically literate."

Summary of Recommendation:
Professor Baxter is a leader in his field. He has been very successful integrating the study of historical linguistics into the curricula of both his departments. He continues to be a valued citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor William H. Baxter be promoted to the rank of professor of Chinese language and literature, with tenure, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, and professor of Chinese linguistics, without tenure, Department of Linguistics, 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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