

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

Ruth R. Caston, assistant professor of classical studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of classical studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2000	Brown University
M.A.	1990	University of Texas at Austin
B.A.	1988	Cornell University

Professional Record:

2012 – 2013	Visiting Fellow, Clare Hall, Cambridge University
2008 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan
2005 – 2008	Lecturer I and Research Investigator, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan
2000 – 2005	Assistant Professor, Classics Program, University of California at Davis

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Caston is a dedicated and gifted teacher who has taught a wide range of classes, in Latin and in translation, at all levels from first-year, including Great Books, to the graduate survey of Roman literature. She has developed new civilization courses that meet the upper-level writing requirement. Student evaluations, especially in Latin, have been very good and are steadily improving. She is an outstanding academic advisor. She has also directed many senior honors theses and mentored graduate students.

Research – Professor Caston’s scholarship is focused on the literary interpretation of Roman republican and early imperial authors dating from the third century B.C.E. to first century C.E. Thus, her work covers texts and authors at the core of the Latin literary tradition. Her most significant publication to date is her 2012 book, The Elegiac Passion: Jealousy in Roman Love Elegy, which has received favorable reviews. It offers a new perspective on elegy, arguing convincingly for the central role of jealousy in Latin love poetry, and is praised by reviewers for its intellectual creativity and persuasiveness. Her articles and current project continue her focus on the ethics of classical literature while also moving into new areas. She has an article in press in a top-tier refereed journal, a new project that is well underway, and another paper under consideration. She has also received invitations to write for edited volumes. The referees consistently point to the originality of her thought and the clarity of her writing.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Elegiac Passion: Jealousy in Roman Love Elegy, Oxford University Press, 2012.

“Re-invention in Terence’s Eunucho,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 144(1), forthcoming 2014.

“Pacuvius hoc melius quam Sophocles: Cicero’s use of drama in the treatment of the emotions,”
Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplement, D. Cairns (ed.), forthcoming
2014.

“Lucan’s Elegiac Moments,” in *Brill’s Companion to Lucan*, P. Asso (ed.), Brill, 2011, pp. 133-152.

Service – Professor Caston served as an exceptionally effective academic advisor and helped shape departmental course offerings on the Undergraduate Affairs Committee. Her contributions to the annual Phillips translation prize competition and ceremony were invaluable. Currently she is organizing the department’s literary brown bag series. Outside the university, she has refereed for leading presses and journals.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“This book [*The Elegiac Passion*] (I am sure) will become standard reading in the field of Roman elegy, which is an important area of research in Latin literature. ...here we have a scholar with a high-quality research output, who has written one successful book for OUP [Oxford University Press] and has another in the pipeline, and who in other articles and talks has shown a capacity to move freely across Latin literature. ... I have no doubt that in terms of international research profile and future potential she thoroughly deserves tenure.”

Reviewer (B)

“Finally, there’s the new book, *Terence’s Comic Art*. ...the approach sketched in the proposal and fleshed out in the two sample chapters seems to have three virtues that combine to set it apart: it will provide readings of all six plays...it will read each play against other works of Roman literature in a way that will help to bring Terence more into the mainstream of literary studies and, frankly, make him more interesting...it will focus on the various ethical issues that each play raises. In this last respect, the project shows Caston working from one of her strengths while striking out in a new direction, which is just what I would look to find in a developing scholar at her stage.”

Reviewer (C)

“With all these projects...[Caston] will establish herself as an expert on the major genres of both Republican and Augustan poetry. While...[she] is still early in her (publication) career, her work is well known to experts in the field. It will take a little longer for her to obtain widely recognized international standing, but she has the potential to achieve this status in due course.”

Reviewer (D)

“As regards quality and quantity relative to the award of tenure, I would suggest that the evidence is that the appropriate level has been reached: a book and five articles/chapters have been published, with plenty more to come, but perhaps still more important is the fact that both the published book and the planned second book have been taken up by Oxford University Press, while the three articles are in international journals of high standing and the two chapters in books are the result of invitations which themselves contribute to a sense of the author’s reputation.”

Reviewer (E)

"Ranging over different genres and periods, and demonstrating a lively interest in such currently 'hot' topics as intertextuality, the emotions, and the relationship of poetry and philosophy, Professor Caston's work is characterized by the clarity of her style and the originality of her thought."

Reviewer (F)

"...in my opinion Professor Caston is a highly talented scholar of impressive achievement and high promise. She has already made her mark and...is well on her way to becoming a visible and influential figure in the field of Latin literary studies."

Reviewer (G)

"I have served as an external assessor for ten tenure files in the last three years, for institutions including Reed College, McGill University and the Universities of Colorado, Florida State, Illinois, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia. Ruth's publications are among the most impressive in their breadth of scholarly competence, mastery of ancient evidence, and sophistication of argument that I have had the pleasure of reading."

Reviewer (H)

"...I believe that her strength as a scholar lies both in her ability to combine extensive knowledge of previous bibliography with refreshing ideas and carefully thought out methodological approaches to familiar texts, and in her skill to link a text with its social/historical/cultural contexts and with other texts."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Caston is an innovative Latinist whose work goes from early Latin through the Augustan period. She is an excellent teacher who has shown thoughtfulness and dedication to students, the university, and her discipline. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Ruth R. Caston be promoted to the rank of associate professor of classics, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Susan A. Gelman

Heinz Werner Distinguished University Professor,
Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean,
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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