

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

Jason D. Owen-Smith, associate professor of sociology, with tenure, and associate professor of organizational studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of sociology, with tenure, and professor of organizational studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2000	University of Arizona
M.A.	1997	University of Arizona
B.A.	1995	New College of Florida

Professional Record:

2011 – present	Barger Leadership Institute Professor of Organizational Studies, University of Michigan
2010 – present	Director, Barger Leadership Institute, University of Michigan
2010 – 2012	Interim Director, Organizational Studies Program, University of Michigan
2008 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Organizational Studies Program, University of Michigan
2002 – 2008	Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Organizational Studies Program, University of Michigan
2000 – 2002	Post-doctoral Fellow, School of Education, Stanford University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Owen-Smith has proven to be a conscientious and effective teacher. Despite his enormous administrative responsibilities over the past few years, he has taken on increasing teaching duties. For several years, he taught the required introductory course in macro-organizational theory to the entering cohort in the Organizational Studies Program. It is a difficult course to teach, but Professor Owen-Smith received excellent ratings from his students. Recently he took on the development and teaching of a large course on leadership. He followed up that course with an intensive, research-oriented class—based on the first-term course—that in winter 2014 will allow nearly 50 students to engage in research on leadership. He has also been a gifted mentor to undergraduate and graduate students.

Research – Professor Owen-Smith works in the areas of economic and organizational sociology as well as the sociology of science. He distinguished himself in these fields from an early career stage, and his impact has continued to grow since achieving tenure. Professor Owen-Smith has continued his excellent record of productivity, publishing twelve articles since 2008 (after publishing 24 articles). Among these papers are several that have been extremely influential, and his work overall has received more than 5,000 citations, an extraordinary record for a sociologist, especially at his career stage. Another strong feature of Professor Owen-Smith's record is his increasing ability to generate external funding. Since earning tenure he has been a principal investigator on four National Science Foundation grants with a total of nearly \$2.5 million in

funding. His work on the role of federally-supported research and development spending and national science policy in general led to his being invited to address the Michigan Congressional delegation in Washington earlier this year.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Shared paths to the lab: A sociospatial network analysis of collaboration,” with F. Cabo, et al., *Environment and Behavior*, July 2013, doi: 10.1177/0013916513493909.

“Democracy derived: New trajectories in pluripotent stem cell research,” with C. Scott, et al., *Cell*, 145(6), 2011, pp. 820-826.

“The institutionalization of expertise in university licensing,” *Theory and Society*, 40(1), 2011, pp. 63-94.

“Networks, propinquity, and innovation in knowledge-intensive industries,” with B. Whittington, et al., *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 54(1), 2009, pp. 90-122.

Service – Professor Owen-Smith has a truly extraordinary record of service in his departments, the college, and the university. In addition to his service as interim director of Organizational Studies, he also became director of the Barger Leadership Institute (BLI, an entirely distinct administrative position) and served on the Executive Committee of the Department of Sociology. Once he was appointed as director of Organizational Studies, Professor Owen-Smith continued to lead the BLI, and his performance in those roles has been outstanding.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“I would characterize Jason as a superb scholar who has demonstrated competence in theory building, the application of theory to important problems, innovative research designs, clever data analysis, and the translation of his work into clearly understandable public policy implications. ... What is extraordinary about his record is the extent to which he has drawn upon multiple research and analytic methods, rather than sticking with only one that he knows well. ...I can tell you that 5000 citations in 13 years represent a world-class achievement. It’s the kind of count I would expect of a full professor holding a distinguished chair.”

Reviewer (B)

“I consider Jason to be the most talented and accomplished organizational sociologist of his generation. He has made important contributions to institutional theory, the sociology of science, network analysis, and the sociology of work, often in the same paper.”

Reviewer (C)

“The depth and significance of those accomplishments, as well as the degree to which his work has been recognized across the fields of sociology and organization studies, locate Jason Owen-Smith as a world-renowned leader in sociology and...in organizational studies as well.”

Reviewer (D)

“Owen-Smith is a terrific scholar, and one of the most interesting and energetic sociological researchers working on science and technology in university settings. ... I am always impressed with how intelligently he poses and answers research questions, both in person and in writing.”

Reviewer (E)

"He is one of the leading economic and organizational sociologists of his generation. He is creative, methodologically sophisticated, prolific, engaged, dynamic, and smart as a whip. He has a capacity to see beyond the surface of a scientific field to understand its underlying structure, and the sociological dynamics that are at its heart. ... I can't think of anyone...who had made so many empirically grounded, theoretical innovations at Owen-Smith's career stage."

Reviewer (F)

"...Professor Owen-Smith has had a very productive career. ... He is truly an exceptional scholar, and I look forward to more great things from him in the future."

Reviewer (G)

"...I find Jason to be an exemplary scholar – one whose record clearly merits promotion to full professor in any top sociology department, organizational studies group, or business-school management group. ... I intend to put his name on the list of people we might consider."

Reviewer (H)

"Jason stands out the most in terms of his ability to raise funds. He has an exceptional record of landing large grants and has probably served as the principle [sic] in[ve]stigator on a larger amount of aggregate awards than any other sociologist of his cohort. ... Rather than proposing and testing theories, his papers usually tap into some novel data to highlight emerging phenomena and to report some interesting correlations. ... Jason probably has greater visibility among practitioners of science-related policy than any other sociologist of his generation."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Owen-Smith has continued to engage in cutting-edge scholarship that has been influential in multiple subfields and disciplines. His teaching record is exemplary and his service record is extraordinary. The Executive Committee of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend Associate Professor Jason D. Owen-Smith be promoted to the rank of professor of sociology, with tenure, and professor of organizational studies, 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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