

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS

Approved by the
Regents
May 21, 2015

Dario Gaggio, associate professor of history, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of history, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 1999 Northwestern University
Laurea cum Laude 1992 University of Florence

Professional Record:

2008 – 2011 Director, Center for European Studies/European Union Center, University of Michigan
2007 – present Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Michigan
2001 – 2007 Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Michigan
1999 – 2001 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of History, Northwestern University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Gaggio has distinguished himself as one of History’s most versatile, wide-ranging, and successful teachers. He has taught a total of sixteen courses since his promotion to tenure, including some of the department’s largest lecture courses, and in these he has received genuinely excellent evaluations. He also prominently teaches a range of service courses, rather than small classes closely tied to his research. Although his graduate pedagogy is exceptional, he offered his last graduate-level course almost five years ago. Instead he has focused on teaching the core undergraduate European history courses, including no fewer than four lecture surveys. His course on European integration stands as a bright spot in History’s overall enrollment picture, as it immediately enrolled 118 students. Evaluations for these lecture courses are almost all positive.

Research – Professor Gaggio is a historian of modern Italy whose first book, In Gold We Trust: Social Capital and Economic Change in the Italian Gold Jewelry Districts (Princeton University Press, 2007), established his reputation as an innovative cultural historian of economics. His second book, The Shaping of Tuscany: Landscape and Society between Tradition and Modernity, has recently been accepted for publication by Cambridge University Press. It presents a path-breaking history of Tuscany’s transition from depopulated rural countryside to a major European tourist destination, encompassing the study of culture, politics, and the environment and drawing upon a deep interdisciplinary familiarity with anthropology, geography, and economics. Professor Gaggio has published articles from this project in leading peer-reviewed journals and in field-defining essay collections.

Recent and Significant Publications:

The Shaping of Tuscany: Landscape and Society between Tradition and Modernity, Cambridge University Press, under contract.

“Valuing place/placing value: The elusive normativity of landscape in rural Tuscany,” *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 1, 2014, pp. 556-569.

“Before the exodus: The landscape of social struggle in rural Tuscany, 1945-1960,” *Journal of Modern History*, 83, 2011, pp. 319-345.

“Selling beauty: Tuscany’s rural landscape since 1945,” in The Cultural Wealth of Nations, N. Bandelj and F. Wherry (eds.), Stanford University Press, 2011, pp. 90-113.

Service – Professor Gaggio’s most significant service was his directorship of the Center for European Studies and the European Union Center (CES-EUC) from 2008-2011, which encompassed new curricular initiatives in European Studies as well as a wide range of interdisciplinary lecture series and workshops. He also served on the departmental Executive Committee and has subsequently been an active member of the Eisenberg Institute Steering Committee, where he helped to launch an innovative Public History Initiative.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“I think that Dario’s research program has advanced measurably since the tenure review of 2007. He has moved on into a niche that is very much his own. I know of no other historian of contemporary Italy with quite the theoretical orientation and empirical grasp of his material shown by Dario Gaggio.”

Reviewer (B)

“The manuscript makes a pathbreaking contribution to European rural history, a field that has languished over the past decades. ... Historians have been struggling to rethink their approach to the European rural society...and Gaggio will be the first to provide us with a new map of how to do it. Not everyone will follow his example, but it will be difficult to ignore his methodological contribution and his interdisciplinary approach.”

Reviewer (C)

“...I find his current work on images of the Tuscan countryside fascinating and at the cutting edge of interdisciplinary studies. ... He continues to be a very innovative scholar, with few if any equals in his field. His Curriculum Vitae reflects the importance of his publications as well as his visibility at both the national and international level.”

Reviewer (D)

“Gaggio’s context is Italy, but his panorama is global and his work draws authoritatively and originally on a range of different methodologies and approaches. The determination to cross and break established disciplinary boundaries is, of course, a feature of much of the best recent historical writing, although Professor Gaggio does this with unusual skill and effect. His work draws on fields as disparate as economics, sociology, anthropology, political theory and post-colonial studies to craft cohesive new ways of thinking about and studying processes and experiences of modernity.”

Reviewer (E)

“His second book project, Rural Modernities, focusing on the history of rural Tuscany since the 1930s, has similar ambitions and strengths, and it is similarly an intervention into political

economy and planning, bearing on tourism, urban and rural planning, and sustainability. Once more, he takes as starting point gauzy views about permanence and authenticity, the subject not craft industry, but the countryside of Tuscany, and subjects it to merciless probing to disaggregate the mythic unity of time and space which we all want to invest in landscapes of such ineffable beauty.”

Reviewer (F)

“I strongly believe that as much as In Gold We Trust was an excellent book, ‘Rural Modernities’ will surpass it and become a classic. It will attract significant attention from historians but also other humanists and social scientists, and will give even more visibility to Professor Gaggio’s work. I am not housed in a History department...but considering that this is an era of inter-disciplinarity, whether actual or simply wished for, Professor Gaggio’s work stands out for its wide reach as well as methodological strength and theoretical range in a number of fields and disciplines. In my mind, this is an enormous accomplishment.”

Reviewer (G)

“The manuscript is in an advanced stage of development and from my reading I think it has the makings of an outstanding book that addresses a broad audience in history, anthropology, geography, and heritage studies. I hesitate referring to the manuscript as ‘interdisciplinary,’ because part of its appeal is the manner in which it both blends and subverts disciplinary perspectives.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Gaggio is an accomplished and widely recognized scholar of modern Italian history and of European economic and cultural history whose scholarship has an unusual inter-disciplinary breadth. He is a versatile and highly successful teacher and has held significant leadership positions. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Dario Gaggio be promoted to the rank of professor of history, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Andrew D. Martin
Dean, and Professor of Political Science,
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

May 2015