

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
School of Social Work

Approved by the  
Regents  
May 21, 2015

Daphne C. Watkins Jacobs, assistant professor of social work, School of Social Work, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work [also assistant professor of psychiatry, Medical School].

Academic Degrees:

PhD	2006	Health Education, Texas A&M University
BA	2002	Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Professional Record:

2013–Present	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, Medical School, Department of Psychiatry
2009–Present	Faculty Associate, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Program for Research on Black Americans
2009–Present	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, School of Social Work
2007–2009	Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Michigan Health System, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (NIH K12 Career Development Award)
2006–2007	Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, Survey Research Center (NIMH T32 Postdoctoral Training Grant)

Summary of Evaluation

Teaching: Since she arrived at the School of Social Work, Professor Watkins Jacobs has taught four different courses: two at the MSW level and two at the doctoral level. The MSW courses, in evaluation and in basic social work research, are required for MSW candidates. Professor Watkins Jacobs' course evaluations nonetheless show very high ratings for her excellence as a teacher (4.75 of 5.00) and the excellence of her courses (4.49 of 5.00).

Professor Watkins Jacobs made valued updates to the basic social work research course, which typically emphasizes quantitative methods, such that her sections give equal weight to quantitative and qualitative methods. This teaching focus is consistent with Professor Watkins Jacobs' own scholarship and allows her to enrich classroom content with her own research experiences. Similarly, Professor Watkins Jacobs both revised, and revived, a doctoral course, *Social Equality and Equity*, which had not been offered for a number of years. She has taught it twice and it has drawn students from across the university. In addition to teaching at the doctoral level, Professor Watkins Jacobs has formally contributed to the doctoral program by mentoring students. She has served on three preliminary examination committees, and four dissertation committees, as well as one in nursing. She is co-chair of one social work dissertation committee.

Professor Watkins Jacobs' dedication and creativity, demonstrated by her "living laboratory" approach to both her teaching and mentoring activities, are highly valued. Not only are her formal classes structured around a mixed format of lectures and laboratory, but Professor Watkins Jacobs has demonstrated considerable initiative in establishing the "Watkins Research Lab," as a space in which to conduct research, mentor students at the undergraduate, master's, doctoral and post-doctoral levels, and train them in skills, theory and study design. Such an approach to teaching activities is unusual in social work. Like her scholarship, Professor Watkins Jacobs' teaching via the Watkins Research Lab reflects a true commitment to interdisciplinary and cooperative group work.

Professor Watkins Jacobs has shown great initiative in conceiving of and launching an important online certificate program in mixed methods through the school's Office of Continuing Education. Noticing a shortage of rigorous research methodology courses at the school, she designed a curriculum and implemented a successful experimental course in which students and others can earn a Certificate in Mixed Methods Research. This program targets both researchers and practitioners and has attracted a variety of professionals in a number of fields of study.

Service: Professor Watkins Jacobs has made significant contributions through her leadership in national organizations. She has, in fact, unusually high-profile positions in national organizations for a scholar of her rank. In particular, she has assumed increasingly prestigious roles in the American Men's Studies Association (AMSA), starting as board member, followed by her election as vice president and then as president, the position she currently holds. These positions have not only required her to make executive decisions and take a visible and visionary leadership role, but she also serves as a national spokesperson and has chaired two major conferences. Similarly, Professor Watkins Jacobs assumed a leadership role with the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), serving as co-chair of the Resolutions Committee. This active committee requires participation in the development and dissemination of resolutions on public health policy.

Professor Watkins Jacobs has contributed to the profession of social work by undertaking peer reviews of journal articles and conference abstracts. Of particular note is her participation in reviewing abstracts for the annual scientific meetings of the Society for Social Work Research (SSWR), the discipline's most important research conference, and serving on grant reviews for NIH. She has also served as an ad hoc peer reviewer for a number of highly-ranked professional journals.

Within the university, Professor Watkins Jacobs worked with the Depression Center to develop educational material. Within in the school, Professor Watkins Jacobs has provided extensive service working on several committees. Acknowledgement of Professor Watkins Jacobs' reputation in the school is demonstrated by her appointment by the dean to serve on a temporary basis as the sole untenured faculty member of the school's Executive Committee, and her subsequent election to a full term in this position by the governing faculty.

Research: Professor Watkins Jacobs' scholarship focuses on the health and mental health of African American men over the course of their life span. She has been remarkably successful in untangling salient factors related to age, culture, ethnicity, gender and context that have progressively and significantly negative effects on the mental health of black men. In particular, it is her comprehensive focus on a variety of factors, be they socio-demographic, psychosocial or environmental – that lays the groundwork for future advancements and practical, evidence-based interventions related to Black men's health. Taken together, this careful and systematic work is extremely important because African American men disproportionately suffer from a variety of negative health conditions and outcomes, many of them preventable, while being less likely to seek treatment than either women or other racial/ethnic groups.

Hallmark aspects of Professor Watkins Jacobs' work include its interdisciplinary nature and its complex analysis of intersectionality of roles (masculinity, life course, age) along with careful contextualization of individual factors, considering both socio-historical and psychosocial factors. Her research is also notable for her rigorous use of multiple methods and she has made major contributions to mixed methods approaches. This mastery of multiple methods bodes well for her continued and growing impact on building the knowledge base in the area of African American men's mental health as she asks and answers increasingly sophisticated and demanding questions. Professor Watkins Jacobs is also developing a promising area of intervention research, translating her research findings into new approaches to treatment and prevention.

Professor Watkins Jacobs is a prolific scholar. She has published 29 peer-reviewed articles in high-quality peer review journals. On 17 of these she is first author. In addition, she has published four book chapters. To date, her work has been cited 300 times with a citation-per-year rate that appears to be increasing (Google Scholar). Of note is that her publication venues reflect the interdisciplinary nature of her work and indicate she is favorably competitive in a variety of fields and professions. Her work has been published in journals covering social work, psychology, public health, men's health and men's studies. Her scholarly reputation has led to her many invitations (16) to present her work at local and national conferences, being selected to review grants by the U.S. and Canadian governments, and being elected president of a national research organization on men's studies. The impact of her work has resulted in her characterization as a leading scholar in African American men's mental health research.

Her scholarly achievements are supported by a track record of external and internal funding and further attest to her recognition as an accomplished scholar. She has been a principal investigator on a highly competitive Robert Wood Johnson grant entitled, "Examining the influence of psychosocial factors on the mental health of black men," and is currently a co-investigator on two federal R01 grants: one from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the other from the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR).

#### Recent and Significant Publications:

- Assari, S., Watkins, D. C., Caldwell, C. H. Race attribution modifies the association between daily discrimination and major depressive disorder among blacks: The role of gender and ethnicity. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Disparities*. 2015.
- Watkins, D. C., Hawkins, J., Mitchell, J. A. The discipline's escalating whisper: Social work and black men's mental health. *Research on Social Work Practice*. 2014.
- Watkins, D. C., Jefferson, S. O. Recommendations for the use of online social support for African American men. *Psychological Services*. 2013; 10(3): 323-332.
- Watkins, D. C., Abelson, J. M., Jefferson, S. O. 'Their depression is something different... it would have to be': Findings from a qualitative study of black women's perceptions of black men's depression. *American Journal of Mental Health*. 2013; 7(4S): 42-54.
- Watkins, D. C., Hartfield, J. A. Health education for social workers: A primer. *Social Work in Health Care*. 2012; 51(8): 680-694.
- Watkins, D. C. Depression over the adult life course for African American men: Toward a framework for research and practice. *American Journal of Men's Health*. 2012; 6(3): 194-210.
- Watkins, D. C., Smith, L. C., Kerber, K., Kuebler, J., Himle, J. A. E-mail as a depression self-management tool: A needs assessment to determine patients' interests and preferences. *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*. 2011; 17(7): 378-381.
- Watkins, D. C., Johnson-Lawrence, V., Griffith, D. M. Men and their father figures: Exploring racial and ethnic differences across mental health outcomes. *Race and Social Problems*. 2011; 3(3): 197-211.
- Watkins, D. C., Hudson, D. L., Caldwell, C. H., Siefert, K., Jackson, J. S. Discrimination, mastery, and depressive symptoms among African American men. *Research on Social Work Practice*. 2011; 21(3): 269-277.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Having served on the appointments, promotions and tenure committee at our institution, I sincerely believe that Dr. Watkins Jacobs would be successful in obtaining tenure in our institution. As an independent scholar, she demonstrates outstanding scholarship and is recognized nationally for her work, particularly on the mental health of Black men. She is clearly forging an area where there is a gap in knowledge development and where she is making a significant contribution."

Reviewer B: "I believe Dr. Watkins is one of the leaders in the field of Health/Mental Health, this being especially so as pertains to African American males...Dr. Watkins is sophisticated in the use of her

analyses. Clearly, she is, I believe, an advanced scholar in the study of the well-being of African American males...What is most interesting to me about her work is her life span perspective. This, I believe, sets her apart from most others who study life outcomes of this population.”

Reviewer C: “[Professor Watkins Jacobs’s work] is helping shape knowledge about how to research and identify salient issues on Black men’s mental health. Although her research focuses on Black men, it is applicable to a diverse group of men because it examines the intersection of culture, ethnicity, and age. Her research is also foundational in that it uses mixed methods and a life course perspective to guide and inform researching the health of men. Her publications are rigorous both conceptually and analytically and her work reflects a high degree of collaboration, which represent hallmarks of a successful researcher.”

Reviewer D: “The quantity of scholarship Professor Watkins Jacobs has produced to date pales in comparison to its breadth, high quality and its implications for intervention policy and practice with the underserved and marginalized population at which it is targeted.”

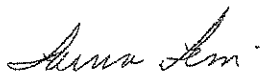
Reviewer E: “Dr. Watkins is a leading scholar in the study of black men’s mental health. Her work is unique in that it relies on multiple bodies of knowledge to inform the subject with particular focus on blending intersectionality, masculinity, and life course perspectives. She grounds her work in a socio-historical understanding of the forces that shape black men’s lives and the implications of these forces for their emotional health. Her use of qualitative and quantitative methods brings depth to her scholarship. In addition, her work privileges both research and practice equally in ways that are not often found in the literature.”

Reviewer F: “Dr. Watkins Jacobs’s overall research offers a significant contribution to the knowledge base of the profession...Her studies are buttressed with the use of strong methodological designs and statistical applications. The findings are across the board useful to researchers and practitioners.”

Reviewer G: “Dr. Watkins’ research [on] the health of underserved and marginalized population groups with a focus on black men is original, innovative, and exceptionally well done.”

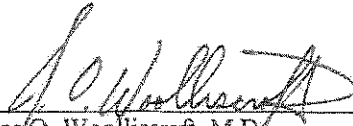
Reviewer H: “If [Professor Watkins Jacobs] were to be considered for tenure and promotion at my institution, her record of research and scholarship, as well as her early impact on the field of African American men and depression would be commensurate with the very top success metric associated with being tenure and promoted. She is clearly one of the strongest and most published social work scholars in her substantive area.”

Summary of Recommendation: I recommend, in agreement with the School of Social Work’s tenure and promotion and executive committees, that Assistant Professor Daphne C. Watkins Jacobs be promoted to the rank of associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.



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Laura Lein  
Katherine Reebel Collegiate Professor of  
Social Work, Professor of Anthropology  
and Dean, School of Social Work



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James O. Woolliscroft, M.D.  
Dean, Medical School  
*Lyle C. Roll Professor of Medicine*

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