

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

Nojin Kwak, associate professor of communication studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of communication studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2001	University of Wisconsin, Madison
M.A.	1993	University of Wisconsin, Madison
B.A.	1990	Sogang University

Professional Record:

2012 – present	Director, Committee on Institution Cooperation, Korean Studies e-School, University of Michigan
2009 – present	Director, Nam Center for Korean Studies, University of Michigan
2006 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, University of Michigan
2001 – 2006	Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, University of Michigan
2000 – 2001	Instructor, Department of Communication, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Kwak is a dedicated and tireless teacher, who is highly effective. He has been an indispensable member of the faculty who frequently teaches core courses in the undergraduate and graduate student curricula. This includes the required large lecture courses to which he brings clarity, accessibility, and interactivity to the pedagogical experience. Professor Kwak successfully mentors a large number of Ph.D. students. He has also developed internationally acclaimed and often duplicated curricula for the Nam Center and the CIC Korean Studies e-school.

Research – Professor Kwak is an internationally recognized scholar whose research centers on mobile telephony, “political talk,” and social networks and political engagement. He is interested in the varying ways in which mobile communication technologies have affected an individual’s social and, in particular, political beliefs and connectedness – across different countries and across individuals with different pre-existing ideas and interests. Professor Kwak’s work spans a number of other highly salient themes in communication studies, including attitudes on privacy protection and the role of satire and/or negativity in political participation. Professor Kwak has published thirteen papers in peer-reviewed journals and three book chapters since his promotion to associate professor. His research has been published in top journals in his field. Professor Kwak currently has one scholarly article under review, and four major projects in progress. He continues to plan interdisciplinary conferences and engages in grant writing.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- “Hearing the other side revisited: The joint workings of cross-cutting discussion and strong tie homogeneity in facilitating deliberative and participatory democracy,” with H. Lee and S. Campbell, *Communication Research*, 42, 2015, pp. 569-596.
- “The affect effect of political satire: Sarcastic humor, negative emotions, and political participation,” with H. Lee, *Mass Communication and Society*, 17, 2014, pp. 307-328.
- “Mobile communication and strong network ties: Shrinking or expanding spheres of political dialogue?” with S.W. Campbell, *New Media and Society*, 14(2), 2012, 262-280.
- “Mobile communication and civil society: Linking patterns and places of use to engagement with others in public,” with S.W. Campbell, *Human Communication Research*, 37(2), 2011, pp. 207-222.

Service – Professor Kwak’s list of service to the University of Michigan and to the discipline is quite long, and notably successful. He directs the Nam Center for Korean Studies and the CIC University Group’s Korean Studies e-school. In the Department of Communication Studies he serves on the Executive Committee, providing valuable leadership. He has served as the president of the Korean American Communication Association and as program chair of the 30th Anniversary Conference Planning Committee for that organization. Professor Kwak is the liaison officer to the commission on minorities and is the chair of the Recruitment Committee of the Communication Theory and Methodology Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“Dr. Kwak’s efforts over the last decade have filled an important gap in the literature. In addition to his work in the mobile technology area, his research in the area of social capital, social network connections, and political behavior has been impactful. ...[his] visibility and reputation are strong within the field at the national and international levels.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Dr. Kwan has created a wonderful undergraduate program... This type of program, that takes 20 or so undergraduates and enhances their undergraduate career in demonstrable ways, takes enormous energy and commitment from the faculty and the center. ... In my experience, Dr. Nojin Kwak would be a strong candidate for promotion to full professor. I have every reason to believe that his energy, intellect, and ideas will continue to lead to provocative and important scholarship for years to come...”

Reviewer (C)

“...I consider A/P Kwak to be one of the emerging leaders in the study of mobile communication and political life. It is an important area of scholarship that integrates different streams and phases of his research interests across a 15-year career. He is a scholar whose work is characterized by consistent quality and a flair for attracting resources. These are auspicious qualities for a successful academic career.”

Reviewer (D)

“There are a handful of scholars in Nojin’s cohort in all of communications who have exceeded 3000 citations to their work. Nojin has over 3600, according to Google Scholar... ..I believe Nojin has a publication record, citation profile, theoretical contributions, international scope, and grant getting ability that merit promotion to full professor.”

Reviewer (E)

“...[Professor Kwak’s journal] articles have a strong theoretical framework, which leads to excellent hypotheses/research questions. ...[he] certainly has done a great job of advancing theory.”

Reviewer (F)

“U-M, as well as the Nam Center, has benefited from his clear vision as the center director as much as he has from the extraordinary opportunities at one of the public Ivy Leagues and the well-endowed center. ...Kwak has established himself as a fine communication scholar with a proven track record and with a well-thought-out future agenda as the Nam Center director. He is superbly qualified to be a full professor.”

Reviewer (G)

“...[Professor Kwak’s] efforts have made solid contributions to the theoretical and empirical research of digital media and citizenship engagement. ...I would say Dr. Nojin Kwak is an important and creative scholar in the field of digital media and political communication. His works in this area has been widely recognized and highly cited, not only within the United States but also internationally.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Kwak is an influential, internationally recognized scholar. He is also an excellent teacher and mentor. He has provided exemplary leadership to the department, university, and discipline. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Nojin Kwak be promoted to the rank of professor of communication studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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