

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Information

Christian E. Sandvig, associate professor of information, with tenure, School of Information, is recommended for promotion to professor of information, with tenure, School of Information [also associate professor of communication studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts].

Academic Degrees:

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| Ph.D. | 2002 | Stanford University |
| M.A. | 1999 | Stanford University |
| B.A. | 1997 | University of California, Davis |

Professional Record:

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| 2012 – present | Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, University of Michigan |
| 2012 – present | Associate Professor, School of Information, University of Michigan |
| 2011- 2012 | Co-Director, Center for People and Infrastructures, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign |
| 2008 – 2012 | Associate Professor, Department of Media and Cinema Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign |
| 2008 – 2012 | Associate Professor, Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign |
| 2008 – 2012 | Associate Professor, Institute of Communication Research, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign |
| 2002 – 2008 | Assistant Professor, Department of Speech Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign |

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Sandvig has demonstrated excellence in instruction across curricula in both the Department of Communication Studies and the School of Information. In Communication Studies, he created a new presentation format for students in a core undergraduate course and improved research lab infrastructures. In the School of Information, he pioneered training structures for his graduate student instructors in a large required course. His doctoral methods seminar draws students from diverse schools around UM. He successfully advises Ph.D. students and post-doctoral fellows. His evaluations evidence commitment to teaching, and a pedagogical style that is driven by rigor, humor, and careful student engagement.

Research: Professor Sandvig is an outstanding interdisciplinary scholar at the intersection of the communication and information fields. His greatest impact is in the area of Internet infrastructure studies; he has demonstrated how decisions made by designers and early users of emergent Internet-scale systems shape the structure and uses of those systems over time. His research also demonstrates what happens when tension arises between user norms in Internet infrastructure and the legal structures imposed by legislatures and regulatory agencies. He is primarily a qualitative researcher, marshalling data from interviews, archival documents, and social media for purposes of hypothesis generation and policy analysis. He is particularly lauded for his methodological innovations in producing interdisciplinary scholarship in infrastructure studies—a field which he was

integral in developing. His body of scholarship since coming to Michigan in 2012 includes: one edited book, four journal articles, three peer-reviewed conference proceedings in highly ranked conferences (two of which were awarded best paper), six book chapters, and seventeen conference papers. He has a major single-authored book in progress.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Digital Research Confidential: The Secrets of Studying Behavior Online, edited book with E. Hargittai, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015.

“I always assumed that I wasn’t really that close to [her]:’ Reasoning about invisible algorithms in the news feed,” with Eslami, M., Rickman, A., Vaccaro, K., Aleyasen, A., Vuong, A., Karahalios, K., and Hamilton, K., *Proceedings of the 33rd Annual SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, Association for Computing Machinery (ACM): 153-162, 2015. (Awarded best paper.)

“Should I stay or should I go? Alternative infrastructures in scholarly publishing,” with C. Lagoze, et al., *International Journal of Communication* 9, 2015, pp. 1052-1071.

“Seeing the Sort: The Aesthetic and Industrial Defense of The Algorithm.” *Media-N*. 11(1), 2015, pp. 35-51.

“The Image of the Algorithmic City: a Research Approach,” with K. Hamilton, et al., *Interaction Design and Architecture(s)* 20, 2014, pp. 61-71.

Service: Since Professor Sandvig came to UM in 2012, he has begun to make notable service contributions to our institution. Between the School of Information and Communication Studies, he is chairing the Evans Endowment Committee and leading the implementation of five discovery initiatives in anticipation the search for a faculty member to fill the Evans Developmental Chair next year. He also served on the University of Michigan Press Executive Committee. He was the program co-chair of the International Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM) in Oxford, UK, and serves on the steering committee of the International Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Conference on Weblogs and Social Media. He is also an associate editor of *The Information Society*, and is on the editorial board of six other journals, including the top-tier communication journal *Human Communication Research*. These efforts are what Professor Sandvig does best—to be a constructive and active faculty member who works to shape his disciplines while building interdisciplinary bridges between communication and information.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “I rank Professor Sandvig as perhaps the most innovative mid-career scholar involved with Internet infrastructure studies. He keeps pushing the field forward and is looked to as a leader in this arena.”

Reviewer B: “[Professor] Sandvig’s CV clearly tells the tale of an outstanding scholar, a widely recognized leader on the forefront of research at the intersection of multiple Communication and Information fields. And still very much on the rise. ... The number of publications together with the reputation of the journals, conferences and editors of the collected volumes in which [Professor] Sandvig presents his work, place him well within the ranks of internationally recognized scholars.”

Reviewer C: “I am an enthusiastic supported [sic] of [Professor Sandvig’s] promotion to full professor. He has a stellar international reputation in infrastructure studies, and especially Internet studies; he has a strong record of scholarly achievement and is currently conducting some of the most interesting and important research of his career. He is adept at crossing disciplinary boundaries

while maintaining rigor and depth. His work is a picture of what contemporary engaged scholarship can and should be.”

Reviewer D: “I believe that Sandvig’s book manuscript in preparation, *Corrupt Personalization*, will be regarded as a milestone publication in interdisciplinary infrastructure studies scholarship. ...This work represents a clear culmination of Sandvig’s decade-long research stream in infrastructure studies, and I am confident that it will be highly influential.”

Reviewer E: “I strongly endorse your conferral of Full Professor status to Professor Sandvig in light of his substantial contributions to the scholarly literature and his extensive, international reputation as one of the most insightful and creative thinkers in his field. ...I support his candidacy without qualification and consider Professor Sandvig an innovative scholar who has accrued substantial and growing influence in the development of information and communications technologies as well as his recent exploration of algorithms.”

Reviewer F: “[Professor] Sandvig has made a very visible contribution to research in information and communication both at the national and international levels, as well as technology working in a number of related and interdisciplinary areas. He possesses advanced technical expertise...while also having the research methods and theoretic sophistication.”

Reviewer G: “He is clearly productive and the emphasis is on quality rather than filler. The book will represent an important contribution as well. As a scholar in the field, I can attest that his name is very well known and his scholarship widely and appreciatively cited. ... He has and he will continue to make an important and positive contribution to the reputation and intellectual community of Communication Studies and SI at Michigan.”

Reviewer H: “His work is, of course, multidisciplinary, which is the reason it has become beloved by engineers, computer scientists, and attracts university wide acclaim. It also accounts for his success in obtaining awards for synthesis... It’s long been my view that [Professor] Sandvig has established a significant voice in communications studies, and it’s a voice that has will continue to gain recognition nationally. His is a voice that the field needs to and should embrace.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Sandvig’s research has made a significant interdisciplinary impact in information and communication, he is an innovative and engaging teacher, and is engaged in important service activities. With the overwhelming support of the promotion and tenure committee of the School of Information, we recommend Christian E. Sandvig for promotion to professor of information, with tenure, School of Information.



Thomas A. Finholt
Interim Dean, School of Information



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