

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

Yuen Yuen Ang, assistant professor of political science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of political science, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2010	Stanford University
M.A.	2003	Stanford University
B.A.	2002	Colorado College

Professional Record:

2011 – present Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, and Faculty Associate, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Ang teaches courses in the evolution of communism, topics in comparative government, and qualitative methods. Her teaching is guided by big ideas and student evaluations confirm that this approach is very successful. Her presentations are captivating regardless of whether she is teaching in a small seminar or in a large lecture course. Professor Ang guides undergraduate and graduate students inside and outside the classroom, enabling them to do better work with her feedback. Her reach into the graduate program grows every year, and students seek her out to work through questions about China, political economy and development, and qualitative methods.

Research – Professor Ang studies development, governance, and adaptive processes of change in the developing world, and especially in China. Her book, How China Escaped the Poverty Trap, is just out in the prestigious political economy series from Cornell University Press. Her work won the GDN Essay Contest on “The Future of Development Assistance” sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Professor Ang also won two Andrew Mellon Foundation/ American Council of Learned Societies Early Career Fellowships. Her articles have appeared in the top journals in her field, including *Comparative Politics*, the *Journal of Politics*, and *The China Quarterly*.

Recent and Significant Publications:

How China Escaped the Poverty Trap, Cornell Studies in Political Economy, Cornell University Press, 2016.

“Authoritarian restraints on online activism revisited: Why ‘I-paid-a-bribe’ worked in India but railed in China,” *Comparative Politics*, 47(1), 2014, pp. 21-40.

“Perverse complementarity: Political connections and the use of courts among private firms in China,” with N. Jia, *The Journal of Politics*, 76(2), 2014, pp. 318-332.

“Counting cadres: A comparative view of the size of China’s public employment,” *The China Quarterly*, 211, 2012, pp. 676-696.

Service – Professor Ang has served on various departmental committees, including the Executive Committees of the Department of Political Science and the Lieberthal-Rogel Center for Chinese Studies. To the wider community, Professor Ang served on the nominating committee of the American Political Science Association’s Political Economy section, and she has reviewed numerous manuscripts for top journals and publishers. Lastly, she has given 26 invited talks and lectures since 2012. These include presentations in a very diverse range of venues around the world.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“The book tackles the important question of how China managed to break the poverty trap, a question that is of first-order interest to China and non-specialists alike. ... The book tries not only to identify the keys to China success but also is highly prescriptive in nature for countries that find themselves in the same position that China did nearly 40 years ago.”

Reviewer (B)

“Her work reflects a high level of theoretical sophistication, employs appropriate, rigorous and diverse methods, and addresses important empirical questions of great and enduring relevance. ... Ang’s intervention in debates about the roots of development stands out for its careful analytical and empirical attention to how development actually occurs and her painstaking field research on China, a critically important case for this literature.”

Reviewer (C)

“The contributions that Prof. Ang has made to date squarely place her among the very best scholars [in her cohort] in the field of comparative development. ... The quality and originality of her work, the exacting manner in which she develops and supports her arguments through careful comparison and theory-testing, not to mention her demonstrated commitment to extensive and time-consuming fieldwork, leaves little doubt that she will have a very productive and fruitful career.”

Reviewer (D)

“...[Ang’s] intellectual ambition and reach is that of a general theorist who is developing a new framework for understanding development in its many different forms. This book makes contributions at the deepest level of social and political analysis, encourages us to reevaluate the methods and tools of analysis we rely on, reinvents how we look at institutions, and points the way for better and more efficacious policies and human practices.”

Reviewer (E)

“...[Ang’s 2014 *Comparative Politics* article] is analytically sharp and (it seems to me) exactly right in its conclusions. Ang takes a not-so-big empirical observation as her point of departure to argue something nuanced, interesting, and important about state-society relations in [India and China]....”

Reviewer (F)

“...Professor Ang represents some of the best China scholarship that has emerged in the past decade, and possibly even longer. Her approach is primarily as a political economist, but like

those of the best economists, it transcends a traditional focus on goods and services seamlessly stretching into markets for ideas and innovation, investments, and personnel, all the while keeping a steady eye on the bureaucratic institutions that are the lifeblood of any functioning state.”

Reviewer (G)

“Yuen Yuen Ang shows every sign of becoming one of the leaders in the large new generation of China scholars who have come on the scene in the last 5 or 10 years. At a time when the relationship of the study of Chinese politics to political science is changing rapidly, she stands right at the center of that change.”

Reviewer (H)

“...How China Escaped the Poverty Trap, published by Cornell University Press this year, makes very important contributions to two subfields within Comparative Politics: Chinese Politics, and Economic/Political Development Studies.”

Reviewer (I)

“What is new is how the book answers the question of what made China successful. The answer is that it was the process rather than the policies. The book identifies the central, intertwined features of that process: flexibility and encouragement of experimentation but with structure and with certain limits; a clear, narrow definition of success tied to incentives giving many actors a personal stake in the process; simultaneous, incremental change across many interconnected domains. These features of the process help us better understand China’s past successes and its current challenges, and they provide useful lessons for other countries and development agencies.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Ang is a creative and productive scholar, who has already established her position in field leadership. She is also a dedicated teacher, advisor, and mentor, as well as an active citizen in the department. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Yuen Yuen Ang be promoted to the rank of associate professor of political science, 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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