

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Music, Theatre & Dance

Danielle Belen, associate professor of music, without tenure, Department of Strings, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, is recommended for the granting of tenure to be held with her title of associate professor of music, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

Academic Degrees:

Professional Studies Certificate

	2008	Colburn Conservatory of Music, Los Angeles, CA
B.M.	2005	University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, violin performance

Professional Record:

2014 - present	Associate Professor of Music, University of Michigan
2008 - present	String Faculty, Colburn School of Performing Arts and Colburn Academy
2008 - 2014	Director, Ed and Mari Edelman Chamber Music Institute, Colburn School of Performing Arts

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Although Professor Belen has developed an impressive professional career performing in renowned orchestras, performing as a soloist and leading ensembles, her real passion and strength lies in teaching. Since her arrival at Michigan, Professor Belen's studio has steadily increased, and after two brief years, it is anticipated that she will have a full studio next year. Professor Belen's students describe her as professional, inspirational, and demanding that her students develop and maintain high standards both musically and professionally. As is the case with most studio instruction, one of the most powerful indicators of exemplary teaching is measured by students' accomplishments. The successes of Professor Belen's students are growing with impressive wins in prestigious competitions such as the Yehudi Menuhin Competition, Stulberg International Competition, and positions as concertmaster and soloist with several renowned orchestras. It is difficult to discuss Professor Belen's teaching success without mentioning Center Stage Strings, a summer program that is designed to develop the talents of serious young classical music students in the areas of solo and chamber music performance. An additional component of this program is that students focus on becoming "complete musicians" equipped with the skills needed for a professional musician in today's world - from public speaking to stage presence to networking and pedagogy. Professor Belen successfully transitioned Center Stage Strings from the west coast to Ann Arbor this summer; it was a great success, and it is anticipated that this program will be a key recruitment tool for the department and the school in years to come.

Professional Activities: As a performer, Professor Belen has soloed with orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra, and the Boston Pops. As a chamber musician, she has performed at numerous festivals, as well as performing at her own summer festival, Center Stage Strings, which she founded and directed at the Colburn School of Performing Arts and brought to the University of Michigan this summer. In 2008, Professor Belen was awarded first place in the senior division of the Sphinx Competition in Detroit, a competition for emerging African-American and

Latino artists. In 2015, Professor Belen was awarded a Sphinx Medal of Excellence and in connection to this, was invited to perform at the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. for Justice Sonia Sotomayor among other distinguished guests; Professor Belen brought five students to perform with her at this illustrious event.

Service: Professor Belen's level of service to the school is growing and her administrative acumen is becoming more widely known throughout the school. This has resulted in her serving on two important faculty search committees (double bass search committee member in 2015, and chair of the chamber music search committee in 2016). In 2015, Professor Belen was elected for membership on the Council of Departmental Representatives for her department. Professor Belen is a member of two significant professional organizations, the American String Teachers' Association and Chamber Music America. Beyond her remarkable teaching and performing skills, Professor Belen has a passion for bringing music to children and communities that might not have access to the highest level of teaching. She has led classes in high school and elementary classrooms across the United States, primarily in low-income areas for beginning students and non-music students. She is a strong advocate for community engagement that helps build future audiences and contributes to the health of society at large. Prior to her arrival at Michigan, she worked with world-renowned violinist Midori as part of an outreach initiative in downtown Los Angeles' Skid Row. She has a particular involvement in supporting the youth and cultural heritage of Latino communities, reflecting her own background. As Professor Belen becomes more engaged in our local and surrounding community, we anticipate that she will branch out and create and deliver similar programs and events that will have a meaningful and powerful impact on those areas in need.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Danielle is an extraordinary violin teacher, by any standard and at any level, but compared to her peers, she is absolutely at the top. I could easily relate her students' accomplishments, which are unbelievable for someone at her age, such as first prizes at the Klein and Stulberg competitions and second prize at the recent Menuhin competition junior division, but more importantly, I have seen this in action."

Reviewer B: "It is rare for a performer of her caliber to have a sincere interest in teaching and in developing young artists; I can see that she is truly passionate about this endeavor, and she speaks with insight about the process of developing, motivating, challenging and nurturing her students. I believe hiring her was visionary."

Reviewer C: "During the two years she has been at Michigan, I have heard nothing but praise for the passion, energy and innovation she has brought to the school. Certainly, her successful summer program, Center Stage Strings, speaks volumes about her commitment to teaching and her administrative skill."

Reviewer D: "Professor Belen shows a certain enthusiasm and dedication to her profession, demonstrated by her work at the SMTD, her ongoing relationship with the Colburn School, and through the implementation of the Center Stage Strings summer festival. She has proven herself to be an important and polished performer."

Reviewer E: "I have heard positive things about Ms. Belen. She has a reputation for being a dedicated teacher and has earned respect from her students and colleagues. Ms. Belen has a

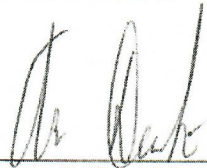
prodigious technique and plays with gusto and musicality. She is a wonderful fit for this prestigious music school, and I recommend her with enthusiasm.”

Reviewer F: “I find her to be a violinist of the highest order; her performances are artistic and commanding. Danielle’s entrepreneurial spirit is particularly noteworthy. Center Stage Strings, which she founded and of which she is the artistic director has become, in very short order, a highly regarded summer destination for young, aspiring musicians. It’s through her vision and leadership that the program has flourished so beautifully. She is enterprising, motivated, and hardworking and her accomplishments clearly place her within the highest echelon of her peers.”

Reviewer G: “Danielle is a gem of a find for any serious music school. She is an accomplished violinist who knows already that she wants to devote much of her career to teaching. As I look at her concerts and publications they attest to her being a force in the violin world.”

Internal Review: Since Professor Belen’s arrival at Michigan, she has been gaining momentum in terms of recruiting, focusing on building a strong studio, collaborating with colleagues, and becoming integrated into life at the university and the community. Her performance level is considered intrinsically strong, and her students are winning some of the most prestigious violin competitions in the field. Relocating the Center Stage Strings program to Michigan was considered brilliant, and is thought to be one of the most interesting and powerful recruiting mechanisms in the department. Professor Belen is a wonderful colleague and teacher who works extremely well with students and faculty outside her discipline.

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Belen is a superb teacher, performer and colleague. Her energy and enthusiasm for her students is remarkable and inspiring. Her administrative talents and leadership skills are known throughout the school and are expected to seamlessly shift across disciplines and into the university and the community. It with great enthusiasm and with the support of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance Executive Committee that I recommend Danielle Belen for the granting of tenure to be held with her title of associate professor of music, Department of Strings, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.



Aaron P. Dworkin
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and Dean, School of Music, Theatre & Dance

May 2017