

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

Benjamin W. Fortson, associate professor of classical studies, with tenure, and associate professor of linguistics, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of classical studies, with tenure, and professor of linguistics, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1996	Harvard University
B.A.	1989	Yale University

Professional Record:

2009 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Classical Studies and Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan
2012 – 2013	Visiting Associate Professorship, Freie Universität, Berlin
2003 – 2009	Assistant Professor, Department of Classical Studies and Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan
1998	Lecturer, Harvard University
1997 – 2003	Associate in Linguistics, Harvard Division of Continuing Education and Summer School
1997 – 1998	Lecturer, Northeastern University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Fortson makes a unique contribution to teaching in the Department of Classical Studies and the university as a whole in terms of the range of subjects that he covers effectively at the lower-division undergraduate, upper-division undergraduate, and the graduate levels. In the Classical Studies curriculum, Professor Fortson serves as an instructor in large introductory lecture courses as well as smaller specialized language courses. His ability to make historical linguistics exciting to students who have no specialized training is remarkable, and his courses are well-received by students. Professor Fortson generously supervises independent studies on languages that would otherwise go untaught (e.g., Sanskrit, Hittite, Old Irish). This additional effort contributes to maintaining the university's reputation internationally as a locus of real expertise in a large number of rarely taught languages and cultures.

Research – Professor Fortson's research is top-notch in quality and impact. In particular, his textbook, Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction, is universally praised as the most important book in the field for scholars and students alike. He is currently preparing the third edition. Professor Fortson has also published a number of articles in the most respected peer-reviewed journals in his field. Finally, he is sought after as a contributor to the most important handbooks and companions in the field, and speaks regularly at high profile conferences in his field. Professor Fortson's new book project to produce an edition and commentary on a partially preserved ancient encyclopedia will be a major contribution to the field. The quality and quantity of his production bodes very well for his continued impact and productivity.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction, Second Edition, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, third edition forthcoming.

“Latin *-(r)ier* and its Indo-Iranian congeners,” *Indogermanische Forschungen*, 117, 2013, pp. 75-118.

“Latin prosody and metrics,” in *A Companion to the Latin Language*, J. Clackson (ed.), Wiley – Blackwell, 2011, pp. 199-219.

“A fragmentary early Republican public inscription from Gabii,” with D. Potter, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 178, 2011, pp. 255-260.

Service – Professor Fortson has a strong service record to the department, the college, and the wider profession. He has served on important committees such as the Elementary Latin Committee, tasked with revising the curriculum in this area. He also served as the director of graduate studies for the department, and as a member of the LSA Curriculum Committee. His service to the profession is outstanding, particularly as editor-in-chief of the widely respected *Beech Stave Press*.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“His book Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction...is an indispensable point of reference for students and scholars alike. ...Benjamin W. Fortson IV is a remarkable researcher, with a rich scientific production of high quality; he is constantly in touch with the most important scholars in his field and is well known to students and specialists alike.”

Reviewer (B)

“He has a global reputation as a leading light of the American school of Indo-European linguistics... Fortson’s treatment of morphology is masterful, but his is also alive to wider issues including that of syntax...”

Reviewer (C)

“Fortson’s publications and presentations are received and reviewed with respect by colleagues across North America and Europe; equally, as his CV shows, he reviews the work of established scholars with confidence, and is a sought-after participant in major international conferences and colloquia. He is an academic that any world-class university in the USA or abroad would be glad to have on the staff.”

Reviewer (D)

“Prof. Fortson is a widely known and reputed historical and comparative linguist who covers the large spectrum of ancient Indo-European languages and many others...[in] both a theoretical and an empirical way... ..he has shown proof of serious work that is a real service to the field, and promises to contribute even further.”

Reviewer (E)

“...Ben has a well-established and well-earned national and international reputation; he has produced a substantial body of work of the highest quality...effortlessly covering the whole field. ...students have corresponded with him about particular scholarly issues, in which

circumstances he is generous and illuminating of the issues.”

Reviewer (F)

“Fortson is highly visible... Even when he is not himself present, his book is: I refer to Indo-European Language and Culture, a ‘textbook’ that is in fact the best introduction to Indo-European studies at any level in any language. Anyone with a professional interest in IE linguistics owns and uses this book. In my case, I require it in two courses.”

Reviewer (G)

“His solid and wide-ranging mastery of historical, comparative and general linguistics is demonstrated by a remarkable quantity of papers, that form chapters of very important world-scale handbooks...companions...and...encyclopedias...”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Fortson is an outstanding scholar, a very strong teacher, and a conscientious citizen of the department, college, and profession. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Benjamin W. Fortson be promoted to the rank of professor of classical studies, with tenure, and professor of linguistics, without 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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