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

Ashley N. Gearhardt, assistant professor of psychology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2012	Yale University
M.Phil.	2010	Yale University
M.S.	2009	Yale University
B.A.	2003	University of Michigan

Professional Record:

2016 – present	Member, Michigan Metabolomics and Obesity Center, University of Michigan
2013 – present	Member, BioSocial Methods Collaborative, Institute for Social Research
2013 – present	Member, Momentum Center, University of Michigan
2013 – present	Affiliate Faculty, Substance Abuse Program, Department of Psychiatry
2013 – 2014	Adjunct Faculty, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University
2012 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Gearhardt is a highly effective and engaging teacher. She has twice taught a large introductory 200-level class – one of the discussions sessions in 2015 and the main lecture in 2015. Knowing that students in large lecture halls may disengage from the class periodically, Professor Gearhardt utilized multiple strategies to maintain interaction throughout the class period. She had students discuss topics with one another and then share their thoughts with the class. She employed iClicker technology and had students periodically answer questions. These efforts were clearly successful. Professor Gearhardt taught a class on addictive behaviors as a freshman seminar. She also taught a course on the same topic to advanced undergraduates. Students in all her undergraduate classes gave her nearly perfect to perfect scores along with excellent comments. At the graduate level she taught a "meet together" on addictive behaviors with the advanced undergraduate students who were part of the undergraduate offering, and seminars with both undergraduate and graduate students. She met with seven graduate students for an additional hour each week and taught a course where graduate students in clinical psychology were trained in the administration of psychological tests and assessments. She received outstanding ratings in all her graduate courses. Professor Gearhardt's informal teaching and mentoring have also been exceptional. Through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program and Honors research projects, nearly 30 undergraduates have conducted research with Professor Gearhardt. She has supervised nearly fifteen undergraduate students working on their honors theses, is primary mentor for three Ph.D. students, and has mentored three master's students. Her advanced graduate students have multiple first author publications and have received fellowship awards.

Research – Professor Gearhardt's research program has had a substantial impact on the field and has great promise of scientific rigor and productivity. Her research focuses on identifying the mechanisms that contribute to unhealthy eating and weight gain. The potentially transformational hypothesis fueling this work is that some highly processed foods may produce biological and

behavioral responses that are analogous to addictive substances. Through a variety of research approaches, Professor Gearhardt has effectively examined the veracity of the food addiction hypothesis. The first step in testing this novel hypothesis was to develop and validate a measure to assess eating behaviors. To this end, she created the Yale Food Addiction Scale (YFAS), which has been adopted by many laboratories across the world and has been translated into six languages. Using the YFAS, she provided evidence showing that a high score is related to addictive-like behavioral and brain function. To more clearly understand the etiology of food addiction, Professor Gearhardt embarked on two additional sets of inquiries. The first is concerned with the types of foods that elicit food addiction. She found that highly processed foods, which are absorbed rapidly and often contain high levels of sugar and or fat, appear to be most addictive. The second inquiry is concerned with understanding the development of food addiction. To this end, she created and validated a child version of the YFAS. Using this measure, she found that high scores did relate to problem eating. She examined brain function and found that food commercials were associated with greater reward area activation than nonfood commercials in teenagers, and teenagers with greater activation in reward areas had greater weight gain twelve months later. Since overweight children and adolescents are at particularly high risk for chronic health problems, her work is particularly important.

Recent and Significant Publications:
"Shared and unique mechanisms underlying binge eating disorder and addictive disorders," with E. M. Schulte and C. M. Grilo, *Clinical Psychology Review*, 44, 2016, pp. 125-139.
"Development of the Yale Food Addiction Scale 2.0," with W. R. Corbin and K. D. Brownell, *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 30, 2016, pp. 113-121.
"Which foods may be addictive? The roles of processing, fat and glycemic load," with E. M. Schulte and N. M. Avena, *PLOS ONE*, 10(2), 2015: e0117959. doi:10.1371/journal. pone.0117959.
"Relation of obesity to neural activation in response to food commercials," with S. Yokum, et al., *Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience*, 9, 2014, pp. 932-938.

Service – Professor Gearhardt is an outstanding citizen at Michigan and to the wider research community. Within the Department of Psychology, she served on the Executive Committee, the Awards Committee, and the Student Academic Affairs Committee. Within the clinical science area, she served on the Graduate Admissions Committee four times and chaired the Social Committee. To the wider community, Professor Gearhardt has reviewed grant applications for multiple organizations within the U.S. and abroad, reviewed submissions for 45 journals, and became the section editor for *Current Addiction Reports – Food Addiction*.

External Reviews:
Reviewer (A)
"Her acumen and creativity is demonstrated by her ability to obtain NIH support for her research. …the acquisition of NIH research support is very difficult to obtain and almost impossible more recently. It requires the careful formulation of an important idea that addresses a question of significance. In addition to creativity, the application to be funded requires outstanding technical merit and an evaluation of the reputation of the scientist. Indeed, her NIH grant support speaks volumes regarding Dr. Gearhardt's creativity, technical ability, and scientific standing."

Reviewer (B)
"One of the more remarkable aspects of Dr. Gearhardt's record is that she has been immensely successful despite vocal critics of the food addiction construct. …there are a handful of scientists [in her field] who do not believe that food addiction exists, and they take every opportunity to

critique…work in this area, both in print and during conferences. Dr. Gearhardt has approached these critiques with grace and an arsenal of research data validating the construct and its myriad of neural and social correlations. …she would be easily promoted at any Big 10 university."

Reviewer (C)
"For an investigator 5 years out from the doctoral degree, these accomplishments and impact place her in the top ranks of her field – commensurate with colleagues significantly more senior to her. …Dr. Gearhardt's work will have a transformative impact on the field, and…she will in time rise to preeminent leadership positions in research and policy. I have no doubt that she would be promoted to Associate Professor (or more accurately, would have already been promoted to that level) at other institutions with U of M's high prestige."

Reviewer (D)
"…Gearhardt is a superb talent and delightful colleague who is much deserving of promotion. … I appreciate the opportunity to contribute this letter in outstandingly strong support of this rising star."

Reviewer (E)
"…Gearhardt is an exceptional clinical scientist with a national and international reputation…[who is] making important and clinically significant contributions to the study of food addiction, obesity and clinical psychology. I also see her with outstanding organizational leadership abilities critical to the current academic environment."

<u>Summary of Recommendation:</u>
Professor Gearhardt has made substantial contributions to the areas of research, teaching, and service and her work reflects very well on the department, college, and university. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Ashley N. Gearhardt be promoted to the rank of associate professor of psychology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and Arts.

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

May 2018