

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan-Dearborn  
College of Education, Health, and Human Services

LaShorage Shaffer, assistant professor of education, Department of Education, College of Education, Health, and Human Services, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, Department of Education, College of Education, Health, and Human Services.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2013	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Special Education
M.Ed. 2005	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Early Childhood Special Education
B.S. 2000	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Early Childhood Education

Professional Record:

2013 – present	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2015 – 2016	Director of Research Partnership ECEC/CEF, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2011 – 2013	Instructor, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Shaffer is rated excellent in teaching. She has successfully taught seven courses in the College of Education, Health, and Human Services, including six cross-listed as undergraduate and graduate. Her overall ratings for the courses ranged from 3.86 – 4.44 and for the instructor ranged from 4.01 – 4.84, indicating that students have a high regard for Professor Shaffer as an instructor and value the courses she teaches. Her teaching accomplishments are also evident from the innovative program (Child Life Specialist) she worked to co-develop with the Department of Health and Human Services and the highly effective ways by which she has redeveloped some of her courses for Academic Service Learning and Dearborn Discovery Core.

Research: Professor Shaffer is rated excellent and significantly capable in research. Professor Shaffer's scholarly work (eight articles in peer-reviewed journals and one in press) strongly connects research to practice. Her work embodies the teacher-scholar model by bringing theory to practice, translating her research findings into practical papers for practitioners, and incorporating her research into her teacher education courses, as she supports her students with the most up-to-date research that can be translated into practice. Her grant work in early literacy, geography, and parent-child interactions to support disadvantaged populations align well with the university's mission of metropolitan impact.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Shaffer, L. (2016). Resources for supporting recommended practices for instruction. *Young Exceptional Children*, 19(3), 47.

- Thomas-Brown, K., Shaffer, L., & Werner, S. (2016). An analysis of how building a collaborative community of professional social studies teachers through target ambient professional development impacts social studies classroom practices. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 4(11), 58-72.
- Hong, S. B., Shaffer, L., & Han, J. (2016). Reggio inspired learning groups: Relationships, communication, cognition, and Play. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 44(5), 1-11.
- Thomas-Brown, K., & Shaffer, L. (2016). My identities are flexible: Narrating the lived experiences of a group of educators. *Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research*, 10(4), 271-290.
- Shaffer, L. & Thomas-Brown, K. (2015). Enhancing teacher competency through co-teaching and embedded professional development. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(3), 117-125.

Service: Professor Shaffer is rated excellent in service. Professor Shaffer has a very active service record serving on twenty committees at numerous levels including the department/college, the university and the profession/community. Two committees had very heavy loads including the Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate. Her contributions to the local community through the Dearborn Early Learning Coalition, the Starfish Family Services Board, and Wayne County Health and Family Services are exemplars of engagement between the university and its community.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Dr. Shaffer's work has the potential of making a significant impact in the field of early childhood education and early childhood special education. This is particularly true with her work centering on models of collaboration and partnership across disciplines that are involved in serving young children with disabilities and their families."

Reviewer B: "Dr. Shaffer's scholarship narrative and scholarly writing provide evidence of a comprehensive understanding of the current knowledge base regarding the complexity of inclusive settings, diversity, social-emotional development, evidence based practices, and special education service system in our country. Dr. Shaffer's research to foster social-emotional development is based on the current evidence-based practices in early childhood special education and is both practical and interdisciplinary."

Reviewer C: "The depth and breadth of Dr. Shaffer's research and teaching are consistent with the performance record of tenured associate professors in early childhood education across the nation. She has a national reputation as a leading scholar in early childhood special education and has made a distinctive contribution to the knowledge base on best practices in professional development. The significance of her work will grow as the U.S population becomes more racially diverse."

Reviewer D: "I believe that Dr. Shaffer has made important and long-lasting contributions to the field. Through publications of her research, Dr. Shaffer has advanced the field in the areas of inter-professional collaboration, increasing reflective practices among in-service teachers, and supporting young children's social and emotional development. Equally important are the practitioner-focused works that Dr. Shaffer has produced through presentations and publications.

I admire her desire to address needs in the field by developing such works as her single-authored publication in *Young Exceptional Children* related to resources practitioners, and others can use when implementing the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices."

Reviewer E: "Her research activities have a solid grounding in theoretical constructs that allow her to investigate the highly complex narratives of persons involved in a variety of educational roles and contexts, through both their internal narrative presentations of their experiences and the external verification of these perceptions. Dr. Shaffer's research foci are timely and important. Exploration of identity and professional relationships will be particularly important as teachers and service providers are trying on new roles in the context of collaborative relationships engendered by a move towards inclusive settings."

Reviewer F: "Dr. Shaffer uses a variety of research designs including mixed methods and ethnography. Her research topics are also varied but upon close examination the thread that weaves through all her studies are ways to help improve the quality of teaching. Either through providing resources for teachers, developing collaborative communities, making classrooms truly inclusive or deepening understanding of universal design for learning and cultural differences, Dr. Shaffer examines the facilitation of professional growth."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Shaffer's work truly embodies the teacher-scholar model as all three areas of teaching, research and service are interwoven and provide insight and support for her scholarship in its entirety. She embraces reflecting teaching practices for both herself and her students to strive for continuous improvement. We are pleased to recommend, with strong support of the College of Education, Health, and Human Services Executive Committee, LaShorage Shaffer for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, Department of Education, College of Education, Health, and Human Services.



Ann Lampkin-Williams, Interim Dean  
College of Education, Health, & Human Services



Daniel Little, Chancellor  
University of Michigan-Dearborn

May 2018