

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

Frederick R. Amrine, associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of Germanic language and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1981	Harvard University
M.A.	1976	Cambridge University
B.A.	1974	University of Michigan

Professional Record:

1998 – present	Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, University of Michigan
1986 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
1995 – 2004	Chair, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
1985 – 1986	Associate Professor of German, Harvard University
1980 – 1985	Assistant Professor of German, Harvard University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – As a teacher and mentor, Professor Amrine makes important contributions to the department's undergraduate curriculum. He is a wide-ranging instructor who has taught across the curriculum, including popular courses on fairy tales and on the imagination, and he has been a trailblazer with his development of one-credit mini-courses. His excellence in undergraduate teaching was recognized with an Arthur F. Thurnau professorship in 1998. Professor Amrine's most critical contribution to the curriculum involved the redesign of the lower-level language curriculum, which he re-oriented from grammar-focused to topic-focused. In particular, the second semester courses took on the interdisciplinary character for which the department is widely recognized. This innovation allows students to focus their learning of German around topics of interest and relevance to them, including areas such as business, medicine, history, and philosophy, as well as literature and other kinds of texts.

Research – Professor Amrine specializes in German idealism and romanticism, with a particular focus on Goethe scholarship, an area in which he is counted as one of the leaders. He has made notable interventions in broader discussions of aesthetics, meta-criticism, and the history of science and philosophy. His forthcoming book with Cambridge University Press, Anagnorisis: The Structure of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister Novels, offers a provocative, original rereading of these Goethe novels in relation to the bildungsroman. Professor Amrine is a scholar who takes and defends strong positions and who has a deep familiarity and facility with a wide-ranging and interdisciplinary body of scholarly work on the topics he is exploring.

Recent and Significant Publications:

"Goethe as mystagogue," The Goethe Yearbook, 23, 2016, pp. 19-39.

“The music of the organism: Uexküll, Zuckerkandl, Merleau- Ponty, and Deleuze as Goethean ecologists in search of a new paradigm,” The Goethe Yearbook, 22, 2015, pp. 45-72.

“‘The magic formula we all seek’: Spinoza + Fichte = x,” in Religion, Reason and Culture in the Age of Goethe, E. Krimmer and P. A. Simpson (eds.), Camden House, 2013, pp. 244-265.

“Goethean intuitions,” The Goethe Yearbook, 18, 2011, pp. 35-50.

Service – Professor Amrine’s administrative work, particularly on behalf of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, has been excellent. During his service as the department chair (1995-2004), his vision and boldness in reimagining German studies at Michigan represents a significant contribution to the scholarly conception of German studies in the U.S., so much so that the kind of interdisciplinarity that is a hallmark of that vision has become known in the field as the “Michigan Model.” With his visionary stance, he convinced many departments outside of German to engage in joint hiring ventures that would reshape the face of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures in a relatively short time span. The strength of Professor Amrine’s service record can be seen in the vibrant, exciting, and dynamic department he played such a large part in creating.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...[Professor Amrine] is an excellent scholar and respected presence in the field of Goethe studies in North America. ...He can be characterized as a rigorous intellectual historian who, at the same time, has made significant contributions as a public intellectual and can write in a style that is accessible to a broader audience.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Professor Amrine has fashioned a long and notable career along two axes: making available and explicating Rudolf Steiner to an American audience, and generating erudite, passionate scholarship on Goethe that has built for us a constellation of relations between Goethe and later thinkers, prominently Freud and Jung.”

Reviewer (C)

“...Prof. Amrine’s study of Goethe’s novel clearly constitutes broad and serious scholarship that is not simply a rehash of what has gone before. *Anagnorisis* might, in fact, prove to be his *magnus opus*. Its prose is engaging and lucid as well as logically luminescent. ...his plan of research together with his ongoing projects indicate that he has no shortage of ideas for continued productivity.”

Reviewer (D)

“In my view, *Anagnorisis: The Structure of Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister Novels* is a highly promising project, largely because it sustains the focus on Goethe’s two important novels throughout, while at the same time arguing for a fresh way of understanding the two as a diptych. ... The Michigan, Ann Arbor department of German Studies is the envy of other US departments, and that is largely due to Fred Amrine’s wise leadership, the result of his dedication to the department as a mission.”

Reviewer (E)

“What makes Amrine unique in a field that is the most researched in German literature is that he has the ability to demonstrate what *Goethean thought* is like. By that I mean that he doesn’t just research Goethe as a relic of the past. Rather he shows that Goethe viewed the world in a way that challenges the oppositions that make up modernity (both modern philosophy and modern individual and social life).”

Reviewer (F)

“I encounter in Amrine’s writing and publications an intellectual with a great deal of knowledge about many topics and an enthusiasm for his work. He writes clearly and has a good, if somewhat selective, knowledge of secondary literature in his field.”

Reviewer (G)

“...Fred stands out as a humble, generous, and articulate intellectual presence. To my mind, he is one of the top three Goethe scholars in North America.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Amrine is a well-regarded scholar of Goethe, German idealism, and German romanticism. His contribution to the teaching mission has been wide-ranging and expansive, including a full re-design of the lower-level curriculum. His contribution to the university in the form of administrative service was transformative for the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts recommends that Associate Professor Frederick R. Amrine be promoted to the rank of professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Elizabeth R. Cole, Interim Dean
Professor of Women’s Studies, Psychology,
and Afroamerican and African Studies
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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