

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan-Dearborn
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters

Michael MacDonald, assistant professor of language, culture, and communication, Department of Language, Culture, and Communication, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of language, culture, and communication, with tenure, Department of Language, Culture, and Communication, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.

Academic Degrees:

Certificate	2017	Centre for Refugee Studies, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK
Ph.D.	2013	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI
M.A.	2007	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI
B.A.	2002	The University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

Professional Record:

2013 – present	Assistant Professor of Language, Culture, and Communication, Department of Language, Culture, and Communication, University of Michigan Dearborn
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Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor MacDonald is rated excellent in teaching. He has demonstrated that he is a reflective and effective educator who draws on current theory in his field of study to inform his classroom practice. Since coming to University of Michigan-Dearborn in 2013, he has taught high-impact courses in Composition (COMP) and Global Studies, piloted and implemented new curricula in existing courses, and developed entirely new curricula. His enactment of a teacher-scholar model has resulted in achievement in terms of both breadth and depth. His ratings on student evaluations are increasingly at the top of the range; since he switched to the use of electronic evaluations in winter 2015, 93% responded with “strongly agree” or “agree” to questions about his teaching effectiveness. In their narrative responses on evaluations, students single out activities like peer review and the writing of reflective documents about writing process as useful practices. They also mention, with frequency, the applicability and transferability of his writing lessons to their other courses. The highest evaluations come from COMP 099 (an additive credit course that students sometimes resent placing into), COMP 270: Technical Writing for Engineers, and COMP 300: Writing Studio, which, not coincidentally are the courses he teaches most frequently.

Since joining the faculty, he has taught eight different courses; four upper-level (300+) and four lower-level. Two courses (COMP/ENGL 327: Advanced Exposition and COMM/COMP/ENGL 364: Writing for Civic Literacy) are upper-division cross-listed that serve multiple majors and fulfill multiple Dearborn Discovery Core (DDC) requirements. One course is a gateway for an interdisciplinary College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters (CASL) program (GLOC 301: Introduction to Global Cultures). Five of the courses are general education, “high-impact” (by

virtue of writing intensity, project-driven ethos, and teacher-student ratio), COMP courses fulfilling campus-wide requirements. He developed a one-credit tutorial, COMP 300: Writing Studio, the first “co-curricular course” in his department and he piloted a wholly new, leading edge curriculum for COMP 099, informed by a data-driven assessment initiative of student learning in the class. Professor MacDonald has used creative projects in his courses, including a hands-on “Board Game” project in tech writing classes wherein students compose and troubleshoot instructional documents and FAQs.

Research: Professor MacDonald is rated excellent in research. He has forged an impressive scholarly profile and become a leader among a vibrant community of rhetoric scholars studying transnationalism and its impact on literacy instruction in both higher education and community-based contexts. He has published a focused body of scholarship contributing significantly to disciplinary and interdisciplinary conversations about the intersections of literacy and refugee studies, literacy “sponsorship,” and basic writing and multilingual pedagogies. Since arriving at University of Michigan-Dearborn in 2013, he has published seven peer-reviewed journal articles (two co-authored and five solo-authored) in leading academic journals. His co-authored *Journal of Basic Writing* article won the Department Language, Culture, and Communication’s inaugural Vansant-Spoiden Award, which honors achievement in refereed research. He has also presented seven talks at national conferences and two at regional conferences, and completed the Certificate in Forced Migration at the University of Oxford (UK) Centre for Refugee Studies, a prestigious summer research program.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- MacDonald, Michael T., “Governing Sponsorship in a Literacy Support Program for Resettled Refugee Students.” *Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning* 18.1 (2018): 39-70.
- MacDonald, Michael T., “Troubling Sympathy: Teaching Refugee Narratives.” *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 32.3 (2018): 60-77.
- MacDonald, Michael T., “Cultivating a Global Perspective Through Refugee Narratives.” *Prompt* 2.2 (2018): 49-57.
- MacDonald, Michael T., DeGenaro, W., “Negotiating a Transcultural Ethos from the Ground Up in a Basic Writing Program.” *Journal of Basic Writing* 36.1 (2017): 25-55.
- MacDonald, Michael T., “‘My Little English:’ A Case Study of Decolonial Perspectives on Discourse in an After-School Program for Refugee Youth.” *Community Literacy Journal* 11.2 (Spring 2017): 16-29.
- Shapiro, S., MacDonald, Michael T., “From Deficit to Asset: Locating Discursive Resistance in a Refugee-Background Student’s Written and Oral Narrative.” *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*. 16.2, March 31, 2017.
- MacDonald, Michael T., “Emissaries of Literacy: Representations of Sponsorship and Refugee Experience in the Stories of the Lost Boys of Sudan.” *College English* 77.5 (2015): 408-28.

Service: Professor MacDonald is rated excellent in service. He performs extensive service across the campus, college, and most extensively the department/discipline. This service has been exemplary, demonstrably beneficial, and informed by his disciplinary expertise; indeed in

his service narrative, he reflects (accurately) that “the lines between my teaching, research, and service are often blurred.” For instance, he led a two-year, data-driven assessment of Composition (COMP) 099 that was ostensibly a service commitment that resulted in multiple national conference presentations and a peer-reviewed publication. Other service work informed by Professor MacDonald’s expertise include his coordination of composition placement exam readings (entrance assessment), collaboration with the HUB for Teaching and Learning Resources (HUB) on several faculty development programs focused on supporting multilingual learners, contributions to the professional development of Writing Center tutors, and organization of two well-attended panel discussions on immigration. In addition, Professor MacDonald has served on multiple search committees: Language, Culture, and Communication’s Executive committee, the Writing Awards committee, and the Commencement Speaker Selection committee. Beyond committee work, Professor MacDonald established stronger articulation between composition and the College of Engineering and Computer Science via a series of curriculum meetings with engineering faculty and staff, resulting in more explicit and reflective syncing of learning goals and practices in COMP 270: Technical Writing for Engineers and College of Engineering and Computer Science coursework. He has also engaged in extensive outreach-cum-promotion (with advising office, faculty across the curriculum, records and registration, and other stakeholders) for the one-credit tutorial he developed, COMP 300: Writing Studio.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “I find Dr. MacDonald’s work to belie the relatively few years he has spent working as scholar and teacher. In my estimation his research serves, consistently and well, to challenge popular and institutional discourses of marginalized populations of students, and does so in ways that contribute greatly to the scholarship and pedagogies that address his participants’ literate lives... What I appreciate about these texts as well, particularly in the case of his *Community Literacy Journal* article, is his ability to blend ‘hard’ data with narratives of his case-study participants in compelling ways, as he is doing important analytic work to assert the importance of attending to students’ lived experience.”

Reviewer B: “Professor MacDonald, in my view, is doing highly credible scholarly work in an area of our field that definitely needs it. He has made some good strategic decisions about his scholarship, as well--placing an early article in *College English* and collaborating with both institutional and national colleagues.”

Reviewer C: “Dr. MacDonald is a brilliant and innovative scholar who has made important contributions to both literacy studies and refugee studies... I think Dr. MacDonald is on the cutting edge of conversations in literacy and cultural studies about refugee writing and teaching.”

Reviewer D: “His more overtly pedagogical piece, ‘Troubling Sympathy,’ challenges those of us who assign refugee narratives to radically reflect on how we introduce, read, and guide our students through reading these texts. On reading the abstract alone, I knew that I would ask Dr. MacDonald’s permission to make this article available to our faculty, as such assignments are very common across the curriculum at my university... This piece is located exactly at the intersection between teaching and research, providing us with a model of teacher self-reflection

and a useful theoretical lens (the reader as spectator of human suffering) through which we can analyze rhetorical situations.”


Reviewer E: “What sets Professor MacDonald apart from other scholars in the field of literacy studies is his unique combination of methodological rigor and interdisciplinary breadth. His published work integrates nuanced humanistic approaches to literacy with fine-grained social scientific analysis, taking as his subject such diverse data sets as literary texts, student discourse, course curricula, and in one co-authored publication, even a whole writing program. The result is scholarship that moves the field of literacy studies forward in both careful and crucial ways... These publications have found homes in excellent journals: *College English*, the premier humanist publication for literacy studies, *Community Literacy Journal*, the premier comp/rhet journal for community engaged studies, *Journal of Basic Writing*, the premier journal for basic writing studies, and [*Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*], which shows off MacDonald’s social scientific and education chops. Taken together, this is an impressive portfolio of published work.”

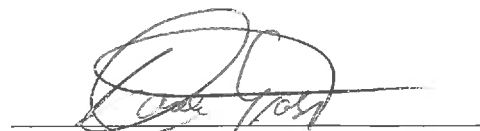
Reviewer F: “Professor MacDonald is a careful and insightful researcher with impressive range and flexibility... While all of [his scholarship] addresses the concerns of refugees and literacy learning, he applies his expertise on refugee studies not just to literacy studies theory but also the practical concerns of the classroom and writing program administration. I was truly impressed by how he was able to take his knowledge and organically shine it onto curricular issues, both as an administrator and as a teacher.”

Reviewer G: “I find MacDonald’s work overall to be impressive for its breadth, depth, and nuanced analysis. I see in his work the foundation for years of productive and important scholarship in rhetoric and composition with particular attention to literacy studies and its intersection with refugee studies and multilingual writing... MacDonald has developed a body of scholarly writing that is theoretically sophisticated, useful and smart when he has placed his theoretical work in service to pedagogy, and, in general, a pleasure to read. I would easily place his work among a similar cohort of [junior] scholars... who each take up questions about literacy and language in the context of transnationalism, multilingual writing, and mobility.”

Summary of Recommendation:

We are very pleased to recommend, with strong support of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters Executive Committee, Michael MacDonald for promotion to associate professor of language, culture, and communication, with tenure, Department of Language, Culture, and Communication, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.


Martin J. Hershey, Dean
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters


Domenico Grasso, Chancellor
University of Michigan-Dearborn

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