

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION

The University of Michigan

A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Geoffrey Thün, associate professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, is recommended for promotion to professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

Academic Degrees:

M.UD.	2007	University of Toronto, ON, Canada
B.Arch.	1996	University of Waterloo, Cambridge, ON, Canada
B.ES.	1994	University of Waterloo, Environmental Studies, Cambridge, ON, Canada
B.A.	1988	University of Western Ontario, Sociology, London, ON, Canada

Professional Record:

2014 – Present	Associate Dean for Research and Creative Practice, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan
2014 – Present	Associate Professor of Architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan
2009 – 2014	Associate Professor of Architecture, without tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan
2007 – Present	Partner, Director: Design Research, RVTR Inc.
2006 – 2009	Assistant Professor of Architecture, University of Waterloo, Cambridge ON, Canada
2005 – 2007	Partner, Velikov + Thün Building Studio
2000 – 2005	Associate/Project Architect, Baird Sampson Neuert Architectures

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Thün has made significant contributions to teaching by bringing to bear his distinguished track record in research to the professional curriculum of the architecture program. His primary teaching responsibilities have been in the master of architecture professional degree, where he has offered lecture, studio, and seminar classes. Over three years, he worked with Professors Meredith Miller and Jen Maigret on the development of a new, required lecture class entitled “Sustainable Systems,” aimed at integrating multi-disciplinary perspectives working on issues of energy, climate, waste, biodiversity, and social equity. Professor Thün’s course evaluations are strong and students appreciate the breadth of his knowledge and his generosity in sharing it. The fluid relationship between Professor Thün’s research and design practice and his pedagogical approach reflects the rigor and research for which the Taubman College architecture program is increasingly known for as graduates move into a more research-focused professional practice environment.

Research: Professor Thün is a nationally and internationally recognized authority in the field of high performance envelope technologies and adaptive building design. He has maintained substantial funding with industry partners such as Ford Motor Company and Wanxiang Group

Corporation as well as the American Institute of Architects, the U.S. Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and the Belmont Forum. Professor Thün's work has received numerous awards and been published and presented at peer-reviewed conferences. His multi-year project "Infra-Eco-Logi-Urbanism" has traveled to Centre de Design de l'UQAM, Montreal, Ryerson University, Yale University, and the University of Tennessee. Park Books published a book of the same name in 2015. Professor Thün's practice, RVTR, was chosen to represent Canada at the 2016 Venice Biennale—arguably architecture's most distinguished exhibition venue—and subsequently won a 2017 Azure Magazine Award and 2017 Canadian Society of Landscape Architects National Award. His project "Infundibuliforms" received an honorable mention in Architect magazine's highly selective annual R+D award program. In addition to publications, his projects have been presented at multiple peer-review and invited settings nationally and internationally including the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, the Association for Computer Aided Design in Architecture, the International Association for Spatial and Shell Structures, and the Institute for Computational Design and Construction. With his collaborators, Professor Thün holds one patent and has one invention disclosure.

Recent and Significant Publications, Exhibitions and Awards:

AZ Awards Program: Winner: EXTRACTION, Award Category: Social Good, Pierre Belanger/PSYS: Curator, RVTR: Design Research and Exhibition Design, 2017.
Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA/AAPC), National Award of Excellence EXTRACTION, Award Category: Design Communication, Risk and Resilience Pierre Belanger: Curator, RVTR: Design Research and Exhibition Design, 2017.
Architect Magazine, R&D Award Program, infundibuliforms (Wes McGee, Geoffrey Thün & Kathy Velikov) Honorable Mention, 2016.
Canada Council for the Arts: 2016 Venice Biennale of Architecture, Pierre Belanger: Curator, RVTR: Design Research and Exhibition Design, 2015.
Thün, G., Velikov, K., Ripley, C., & McTavish D. (2015). Infra-Eco-Logi Urbanism: A Project for the Great Lakes Megaregion. Zurich, CH: Park Books.

Service: As associate dean for research and creative practice, Professor Thün has elevated the position of Taubman College, making visible the multiple modalities of practice pursued by both the architecture and urban planning faculty, their impact and their centrality to a number of other allied or adjacent fields of study. Most fundamentally, he has assisted in increasing external funding and industry partnerships and has played a crucial role in the creation of partnerships between the college and other UM researchers. Professor Thün also provides significant external service to the discipline. This includes serving as a paper referee for peer-reviewed journals such as Leonardo, TAD, and IJAC as well as peer reviewer for ACSA conferences and the TxA Emerging Design and Technology Conference. He has also served as a grant reviewer and offered consulting to other institutions looking to expand their research portfolios. Most significantly, he has been a co-organizer of multiple conferences including the ACADIA conference hosted by UM in 2016 and Shaping Future Cities at Taubman College in 2018.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "The amount of funding he brings in is impressive... I think that many schools, my own included, would be well served by having him in our full professor ranks."

Reviewer B: “He is prolific, and yet also careful and precise... He bridges disciplines from architecture to urbanism as many of us attempt today, but he also does this with a view to ecology and land use in ways that brings the disciplines (urban planning, urban design, architecture, energy/engineering) into an even wider lens that in the end brings us to a sustainable development model or goal.”

Reviewer C: “His work has been recognized by the most distinguished national and international institutions, and scholars and practitioners within his field, as is evidenced by the number and range of invited lectures and conference paper presentations, research grants, exhibitions, and awards and honors received by him and his firm for its innovations in architectural thought and design.”

Reviewer D: “...there’s a convincing reciprocity between the theoretical and the speculative, between research and practice, and between writing and design. These are characteristics of a highly thoughtful educator, researcher and practitioner, concerned with how technology and cultural ideas inform the built environment. His ability to make the chemistry work between his research, practice and teaching is commendable. His critical, computational research methods and systems design approach in the face of ever-increasing complexity holds much promise given our climate emergency and rising planetary-scale problems.”

Reviewer E: “Thün’s work on Infra Eco Logi Urbanism offered one of the first comprehensive representations of post-metropolitan infrastructure and presented design as a means to research, understand, imagine and support the future of the Great Lakes area as a resilient American megaregion.”

Reviewer F: “For various reasons, faculty in the professional disciplines are often challenged in procuring significant grant support. Prof. Thün’s grant record is exceptional and notable. Overall, his research and creative projects record is exceptionally strong and above average for architecture faculty in comparative R1 universities.”

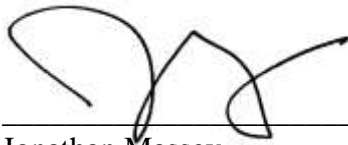
Reviewer G: “...Professor Thün’s ability to move between scales with the same compass—one that overlays environmental responsibility and social justice—as valuable and a real asset in a Full Professor. I see his ability to initiate research projects both technical and territorial in nature, to pull together and make large teams of collaborators effective, and to find funding for all this as, again, an extraordinary asset to the school, its students and his colleagues. I want to emphasize how his combination of information rich mapping, and speculative and applied research is exactly what is needed to work on the hard problems he has set for himself.”

Reviewer H: “... I place Prof. Thün’s contributions to contemporary urbanism as among a handful, perhaps a half dozen at most, of the most interesting mid-career faculty working on the scale of the contemporary urban region. In that regard, Prof. Thün has produced and disseminated an original body of work on topics of great import, and this is exceptionally rare, particularly with respect to the role of design research in imagining alternative urban futures.”

Reviewer I: “On Research and Scholarship, the body of work is remarkable. His small team has published, presented and exhibited at numerous, widely respected conferences and workshops on technology. They list a number of citations and awards from respected organizations including ACSA, ACADIA, TAD, TEX-FAB, and Architizer. Their work is well published as well in widely respected journals and conference proceedings including ACSA, ACADIA and JAE.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Thün is a productive and influential faculty member. His approach to design research resonates especially well with recent trends in the college and the architectural discipline, his strategies of dissemination are admirable, and his capacity for collaborative research is exemplary. His recent record of grants is without equal in the architecture program, and he extends his research agenda effectively into his teaching, where he has been instrumental in achieving the kinds of smart and green design initiatives now in place at all schools of architecture. It is with the support of the Taubman College Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Executive Committee that I recommend Geoffrey Thün for promotion to professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Massey', is written over a horizontal line.

Jonathan Massey
Dean and Professor
A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

May 2020