

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan – Flint
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Theater and Dance

Shelby Newport, associate professor of theatre, with tenure, Department of Theatre and Dance, College of Arts and Sciences, is recommended for promotion to professor of theatre, with tenure, Department of Theatre and Dance, College of Arts and Sciences.

Academic Degrees:

MFA	2009	Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana
BA	2006	Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa

Professional Record:

2019-Present	Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan
2015-Present	Associate Professor, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan
2010-2015	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan – Flint, Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Since her promotion to 2015, Professor Newport has taught eight distinct courses ranging from Introduction to Theatre and Stage Makeup to Clothing in Western Culture and Costume Design while supporting two key departmental initiatives, cultivating important professional partnerships and creating mentoring opportunities for students. As the resident costume designer, the core of Professor Newport's teaching involves coursework in costume and make-up design. Her teaching philosophy emphasizes "helping all students find their theatrical voice" and she takes seriously her role as a mentor as she works closely with individual students each semester in campus productions. She also established an advising model that has been adopted across her department while serving as the chairperson. Student evaluations have an average median score of 4.5 on "Overall, this was an excellent course" and a 4.7 on "Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher." She is reflective in her practice, noting how changing students and social issues influence her use of social media platforms and framing of assignments in her teaching over the years. Professor Newport has also supervised Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) students and graduate students in costume design projects with professional partners, leading to internships and enhanced career opportunities.

Professor Newport has received numerous awards and certifications for her teaching: the Lucinda Hinsdale Stone Junior Faculty Award, a teaching innovation award from the Kennedy Center, and a coaching certificate from the Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching. She demonstrates continued course development. She co-designed and led an interdisciplinary study abroad trip to Japan focusing on arts and business, which was open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Research: Professor Newport has designed 37 productions since 2015, many in professional theatre companies, which has brought heightened visibility to UM-Flint. In addition to 15 mainstage productions for the University of Michigan–Flint, three were Michigan premiere productions, ten world premier productions of new plays, and one international touring dance production. Professor Newport's contemporary dress designs are sought after as demonstrated by her repeated engagements at various professional regional theatres including the Purple Rose Theatre (Chelsea, Michigan) and the Detroit Public Theatre. She prides herself on ensuring her designs are deeply rooted in character

development, period styles, and influenced by the overall design concept for each project while paying great attention to detail in execution. Professor Newport has been able to increase her professional work following her initial promotion and tenure, by utilizing funded research positions and graduate assistantships to engage students with professional work. She is now a resident artist at the Purpose Rose Theatre Company. Her work with the Detroit Public Theatre production of *Birthday Candles* by Noah Haidle was featured on the cover of *American Theatre* magazine, providing evidence of her impact of the profession.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Costume Design, *Roadsigns*, The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 2020

Costume Design, *A Doll's House, Part 2*, Tipping Point Theatre, 2019

Costume Design, *The Glass Menagerie*, Flint Repertory Theatre, 2019

Service: Professor Newport has performed extensive university and professional service, as befits a professor. She served as the chair for the Department of Theatre and Dance for two and a half years, and as the co-director and director of the International and Global Studies program for four years, bringing innovation and renewed engagement to each role. She served one year on the College of Arts and Sciences Executive Committee, as well as on the strategic planning committees of both the college and the broader university. She has served on search committees for both the director of research and the chancellor positions, as well as a tri-campus committee that revised SPG 601.22 (regarding Employee-Student Relations). She has a reputation of listening and collaborating well with others while ensuring timely completion of meaningful work. For her outstanding service, she was the campus' Distinguished Service Award Recipient in 2019.

Professor Newport has increased her service having served as the editor of the *Design and Production Review* newsletter (Midwest Region) and on the Board of Directors for the United States Institute of Theatre Technology (USITT) for two years. She has continued her service to the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival Region 3 by responding to academic productions throughout our region.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "Professor Newport's work with the new play *Birthday Candles* is notable. The impact of this play-- which traveled to Broadway --and the importance of theaters such as the Detroit Public Theater [sic] who commissioned this new work, was reported in *American Theater* [sic] Magazine, the premier publication for professional non-profit theater [sic]."

Reviewer (B): "Professor Newport's volume and quality level of professional design work would place her in a top tier of university professors who engage in external creative activity."

Reviewer (C): "Ms. Newport's depth and breadth of work is demonstrated by her pattern of working not only on the national level, but also internationally. Her work includes educational theatre, Regional Equity (union) theatres, world premieres and design for film. Each of those areas of design requires specific skill sets and Ms. Newport's variety of design experiences allows her to bring a unique and valuable perspective to her teaching and training of future costume designers."


Reviewer (D): "Ms. Newport has an impressive catalogue of many regional costume designs, as well as many university designs. ... Especially impressive is her work on *Pipeline* at the Detroit Public Theatre, which should be regarded by those outside the theatre field as the equivalent of publication in a particularly high-impact journal."

Reviewer (E): “Shelby Newport’s designs represent a clear approach for each production, focusing on color palette, fabric textures, garment shapes and silhouettes appropriate for the time period and script requirements as well as supporting strong character looks. The results are effective costume designs.”

Summary of Recommendation:

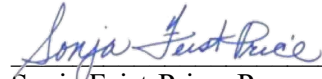
Professor Newport is a regionally and nationally recognized costume designer who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in design for new theatrical productions. She is a creative, engaging, and dedicated teacher, who skillfully integrates her professional work and teaching to deliver extraordinary experiences to her students. She is a leader in service to UM-Flint and to her profession. It is with the full support of the College of Arts and Sciences Executive Committee that I recommend Shelby Newport for promotion to professor of theatre, with tenure, Department of Theatre and Dance, College of Arts and Sciences.

Recommended by:



Susan Gano-Phillips, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Recommendation endorsed by:



Sonja Feist-Price, Provost and
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



Debasish Dutta, Chancellor
University of Michigan – Flint

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