

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
School of Education

Awilda Rodríguez, assistant professor of education, School of Education, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, School of Education.

Academic Degrees

Ph.D.	2013	University of Pennsylvania
Ed.M.	2004	Harvard University
B.S.E.	2003	Princeton University

Professional Record

2014-Present	Assistant Professor, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2013-2014	Research Fellow, American Enterprise Institute, Center on Higher Education Reform, Washington, D.C.

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Rodríguez teaches students at the master's and doctoral levels which represent all degree programs in the Center for the Study of Higher and Post-secondary Education. She has taught thirteen sections of four different courses. Introduction to Higher Education (EDUC 561) and American College Students (EDUC 884) are core requirements for higher and post-secondary education master's degree programs; Public Policy in Post-secondary Education (EDUC 764), is required for the public policy concentration; and Special Topics: The P-16 Pipeline (EDUC 771) is an elective. Her teaching is centered on advancing equitable classroom practices, both in course content and in classroom environment.

In her time as assistant professor, Professor Rodríguez has served on fifteen doctoral dissertation committees (chair of one and member of fourteen others). In addition, she serves as academic advisor to five doctoral students and to seventeen master's degree program students. Dedicated to supporting students' professional preparation, she engages doctoral and master's degree students in her research through co-authorship and co-presenting at scholarly conferences.

Research: Professor Rodríguez's research focuses on understanding and addressing educational inequality. She skillfully bridges the divide between K-12 and post-secondary education research through three interrelated strands of inquiry. The first strand—college matching and choice processes—addresses the fact that Latinx, Black, lower-income, and potential first-generation college students are less likely than other students to enroll in institutions that they are qualified to attend, which has consequences for access to resources, time to degree, and graduation. The second strand—college access as shaped by preparatory coursework—examines race- and class-based disparities in access to rigorous coursework within and across high schools. The third strand—higher education policy—focuses on the applications of her findings to inform evidence-based policy changes. She applies her research with methodological rigor and

versatility, drawing on a variety of quantitative as well as qualitative methods to interrogate particular problems of access and equity in higher education.

Since being appointed at the University of Michigan in 2014, Professor Rodríguez has produced sixteen publications of quality, originality, and impact. She has authored or co-authored eight peer-reviewed articles and has been sole or lead author on six of them. Notably, these publications have consistently appeared in top-tier journals. She has authored or co-authored eight book chapters, including six on which she has been lead or sole author, and has produced nine policy reports and research briefs. In addition, she has given twenty scholarly or invited talks. She has secured grants in support of her scholarship totaling \$430,000 from sources including the prestigious William T. Grant Foundation Scholars Program, the American Educational Research Association (AERA), and Chiefs for Change in collaboration with Orange County Public Schools, Florida.

Professor Rodríguez has been recognized as a scholar who is advancing sophisticated quantitative research that is addressing the most critical equity issues in education today. Her research offers powerful insights on how to shape practices and policies that address systemic and institutional barriers to college access and success among underrepresented students. The high regard with which her research is held is evidenced by her inclusion in the Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research—a primary source for education researchers in which publication of junior scholars is rare.

#### Recent and Significant Publications:

- Rodriguez, A. & Hernandez-Hamed, E. (2020). Understanding unfulfilled AP potential across the participation pipeline by race and income. *Teachers College Record*, 122(9), 1-38.
- Rodriguez, A. & McGuire, K.M. (2019). More classes, more access? Understanding the effects of course offerings on Black-White gaps in Advanced Placement course-taking. *Review of Higher Education*, 42(2), 641-679.
- Rodriguez, A. (2018). Inequity by design? Aligning high school math offerings and public flagship college entrance requirements. *Journal of Higher Education*, 89(2), 153-183.
- Rodriguez, A., Furquim, F., DesJardins, S.L. (2018). Categorical dependent variable modeling and post estimation techniques for education research. In M. Paulsen (Ed.), Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, 33. New York: Springer.
- Rodriguez, A. (2015). The road to undermatch: Understanding the differences between White and Latino student predictors of undermatch. *Journal of Latino/Latin American Studies*, 7(2), 149-168.
- Rodriguez, A. (2015). Tradeoffs and limitations: Understanding the estimation of college undermatch. *Research in Higher Education*, 56(6), 566-594.

Service: Professor Rodríguez has engaged in extensive service at both the unit and school level. She was a member of the School of Education's Graduate Affairs Committee for two years, a member of two faculty search committees, and a member of four doctoral admissions committees. In addition, she serves as an advisor for the Race and Social Justice concentration. A service often invisible in the academy, she serves as an advisor to primarily underrepresented students which carries significant effort and emotional labor as those students navigate racial bias and injustice in the academy.

Professor Rodríguez has held numerous professional service roles at the national level. She is an associate editor of the *Journal of Higher Education*, one of three top-tier peer-reviewed journals in the area of higher education research. She has served roles in the primary professional organizations for education and higher education: two years in the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)'s Policy, Economics, and Finance section and one year in the American Educational Research Association (AERA)'s post-secondary policy section. She also served for two years on the selection committee for American Association for Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) graduate student fellows. In addition, she served as an ad hoc reviewer for funding proposals to various foundations, on technical working groups for prominent organizations, and for several prominent peer-reviewed journals including the *Review of Higher Education* and the *American Educational Research Journal*.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “[S]he possesses a strong record of achievement that is both broad in scope and deep in its analyses. This is exactly the type of quality and rigorous scholarship that is universally praised and featured to elevate the impact of higher education, both locally and nationally.”

Reviewer B: “Professor Rodríguez also consistently asks policy-relevant questions and I come away from this work with a real sense of a scholar with a purpose. Unlike many education policy scholars (myself included), she has a laser-like focus on policies and practices that improve college access and choice for traditionally underserved students.”

Reviewer C: “My summary judgment is that Dr. Rodríguez has distinguished herself as a focused, insightful, and productive scholar focusing on student transitions to higher education... I appreciate the systematic nature of Dr. Rodríguez's work in this area [inequalities in high school course taking]. By digging in and developing a portfolio of work around advanced course opportunities, Dr. Rodríguez has cultivated a unique perspective on the complexity of this issue and its implications for high school to college transitions.”

Reviewer D: “Dr. Rodríguez is a gifted, exceptionally creative and profound thinker on the role of coursework on college enrollment and completion as well as the consequences of ‘choice’ regarding college selectivity. She has carved out a very particular niche of expertise on these enormously important topics, offering very advanced thinking on the organizational, policy, data, and methodological mechanisms on this area of study in higher education.”

Reviewer E: “Through her research, Dr. Rodríguez brings unique insights to bear on this problem of study and provides highly relevant and timely connections to policy. Dr. Rodríguez's expertise in quantitative methods, prior professional experiences in the area of college choice, and positionality as a Latina scholar enable her to conduct highly rigorous analyses that address critical problems in education with nuance and complexity and to generate consequential policy contributions.”

Reviewer F: “Dr. Rodríguez skillfully identified critical issues in higher education to study, used theories and conceptual frameworks to guide her studies, effectively utilized advanced methods,

presented findings in well-organized fashion, drew conclusions based on both conceptual and empirical evidence, and intently discussed the implications for policy and future research. Her overall body of work indicates she has established herself well in the field of higher education and will continue to exert significant influence on higher education research.”

Reviewer G: “In reading the provided articles and essay, I was first struck by how systematic and intentional each of the pieces of work are designed and executed, and meticulously focused on exploring methods to better identify inequality in college access, college readiness, and addressing larger systemic issues that affect access.”

Reviewer H: “Dr. Rodríguez’s research statement demonstrates that she has a clear understanding of how her research fits together and contributes to the field. Frankly, this is one of the best written and insightful research statements I have read in the numerous tenure reviews in which I have participated.”

Reviewer I: “Dr. Rodríguez is one of a handful of Latina scholars in the higher education field engaged in using quantitative methods to answer policy relevant questions with a sharp focus on equity. I was particularly impressed to see her willingness to train herself in both rigorous qualitative and causal quantitative (e.g. a randomized control trial) methodologies to implement an evaluation of an informational intervention aimed at increasing Black, Latina/o participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses as part of the William T. Grant Scholars program.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Rodríguez’s scholarship is recognized as important and methodologically sophisticated. She is a skilled teacher who is dedicated to equity and to continuous improvement. Her service to the school, to the university, and to her profession represents levels commensurate with that of tenured faculty. Professor Rodríguez’s scholarship, teaching, and service are worthy of recognition. It is with the support of the School of Education’s Executive Committee and the Promotion and Tenure Committee that I recommend Awilda Rodríguez for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, School of Education.



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Elizabeth Birr Moje, Dean  
George Herbert Mead Collegiate Professor of  
Education, and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor  
School of Education

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