

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

Sonya Dal Cin, associate professor of communication and media, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of communication and media, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts [also being promoted to research professor, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research].

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2005 University of Waterloo, Canada
B.A. 2000 Queen's University, Canada

Professional Record:

2013-present Associate Professor of Communication and Media, University of Michigan
2013-present Research Associate Professor, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research
2013-present Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Michigan
2012-2013 Research Assistant Professor, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research
2007-2013 Assistant Professor of Communication Studies and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychology, University of Michigan
2007-2012 Faculty Associate, Research Center for Group Dynamics, Institute for Social Research
2007 Adjunct Assistant Professor, Dartmouth College (Winter Term)
2005-2007 Post-doctoral Fellow, Norris Cotton Cancer Center, Dartmouth Medical School

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Dal Cin is a strong teacher and a generous and rigorous mentor. She has been a successful classroom instructor at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Her teaching goes beyond sharing information and imparting technical skills to include training students to understand how to formulate a good question, and revise or reject a bad one. In addition to her carefully thought-out and always improving methodology and foundations courses, she runs a research lab that includes graduate students and undergraduate students from across units, where she includes them in her own research and fosters theirs. Additionally, she is the source of a significant curriculum change in Communication and Media in which the honors thesis program was expanded to include students who may not qualify for the honors program, but wish to engage in thesis writing, making this scholarly activity more equitably accessible.

Research: Professor Dal Cin is a social scientist with expertise in identifying, measuring, and analyzing factors that condition cognitive and behavioral media effects. Her research pushes on the threshold of what we understand about story-based belief change, character identification, the impact that stories have on behavior, and how these effects might occur outside viewers' conscious awareness. She distinctively combines a thorough understanding of cognitive processing with in-depth familiarity with the core ideas of the communication discipline. Professor Dal Cin's methodologically rigorous empirical work complicates the traditional communication model of sender-message-receiver by bringing to light how audiences' memories, experiences, and contexts of

watching influence cognitive processes. She will continue to be a generative scholar who tackles questions important not only to the disciplines of communication and psychology, but also to society.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- Erickson, S., Harrison, K., & Dal Cin, S. (2018). Toward a multi-dimensional model of adolescent romantic parasocial attachment. *Communication Theory*, 28(3), 376-399. doi: 10.1093/ct/ctx006
- Lane, D. & Dal Cin, S. (2018). Sharing beyond slacktivism: The effect of socially observable prosocial media sharing on subsequent offline helping behavior. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(11), 1523-1540
- Cote, A. C., Coles, S. M., & Dal Cin, S. (2020). The interplay of parenting style and family rules about video games on subsequent fighting behavior. *Aggressive Behavior*, 47(2), 135-147. doi: 10.1002/ab.21931
- Dal Cin, S., Mustafaj, M., & Nielsen, K. (in press). Patterns of media use and leisure time among older adults. *New Media & Society*.

Service: Professor Dal Cin's service record is exemplary, displaying a general pattern of service that revolves around informing and empowering traditionally disempowered groups such as URM graduate applicants, immigrant junior faculty, first-generation students, and students without honors-level GPAs. She is also, notably, the first chair of the first DEI committee in the department, serving more generally as the unit's DEI Lead among department leadership.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "What I find most commendable about Dr. Dal Cin's research is the combination of asking timely and socially relevant questions with her methodological attention and care. She is one of several scholars who have a Ph.D. in psychology and work in Communication departments and she is one of the few who advantageously combines the two disciplines. Her experimental background, even when doing correlational research, is evident in her research designs that exemplify keen awareness of issues of causality. Dr. Dal Cin's work is characterized by tackling socially meaningful issues and utilizing her finely honed research skills to approach these."

Reviewer (B): "She has an impressive and consistent record of external funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIA, NCI) and other organizations, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. These awards are another indication of the high quality and impact of Dr. Dal Cin's work; her insights provide important contributions to both basic research and important societal applications, such as improving health campaigns."

Reviewer (C): "Before addressing research quality, I would first like to address Dr. Dal Cin's research productivity. In terms of sheer quantity, Professor Dal Cin's record is enormously impressive. By my count, she has 38 peer-reviewed publications (either published, in-press, or accepted), one encyclopedia entry, one book chapter, 24 conference presentations (in the last 5 years), and several successful grant awards. This is an extremely impressive level of output and would most certainly warrant promotion to professor in my department at [my institution]."

Reviewer (D): "One can also see evidence of an increasing pattern in her publication record of collaborating with graduate students as well as undergraduates in recent years, which is highly commendable. In fact, I feel compelled to make a special comment about Dr. Dal Cin's collaborations with emerging scholars (undergraduate students and graduate students). Reading across her curriculum vitae; research, teaching, and service statements; and publications for this

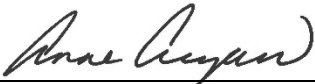
review, a very clear picture emerges. Dr. Dal Cin gives generously of her time and talents to the mentoring of emerging scholars, placing their interests at the center and supporting their development as knowledge producers, from the initial conception of an idea to the fruition of a published article and/or the implementation of a health campaign.”

Reviewer (E): “I was impressed by the quality and creativity of work led by graduate students under her supervision, presumably working with her in her lab (I won’t go through those various recent articles in detail). It seems she has created an environment in which students pursue innovative research questions with considerable research competence and build solid careers in consequence.”

Reviewer (F): “Professor Dal Cin’s service to the discipline is excellent, certainly given the stage of her career. She has served on numerous committees at the University of Michigan. She is a regular reviewer for journals across several disciplines, and she is on the editorial board of *Psychology of Popular Media*. She has served as an external reviewer for several tenure cases, which is an important indicator of her growing seniority.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Dal Cin has published numerous high-quality articles on media effects within social contexts. Eminent scholars in media psychology see her collaborative style as an undeniable benefit to the discipline and recognize her extensive generosity in mentoring graduate students. Her teaching has been consistently strong through the delivery of required courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Her service, concentrated mostly within LSA, Rackham, ISR, and especially Communication and Media, has been superb and consistently oriented toward improving diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Sonya Dal Cin be promoted to the rank of professor of communication and media, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Anne Curzan, Dean
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of
English Language and Literature, Linguistics,
and Education
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