

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan – Flint
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Social Sciences and Humanities

Chris C. Douglas, associate professor of economics, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences, is recommended for promotion to professor of economics, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2007	Michigan State University, Economics, East Lansing, MI
M.A.	2003	Michigan State University, Economics, East Lansing, MI
B.S.	2001	Michigan Technological University, Economics and Electrical Engineering, Houghton, MI

Professional Record:

2012-Present	Associate Professor of Economics, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan
2007-2012	Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Since his promotion in 2012, Professor Douglas has taught seven courses ranging from introductory levels of macro- and micro-economics (ECN 201, 202) and Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory (ECN 354) to more specialized electives including Sports Economics (ECN 335), International Economics (ECN 360) and Quantitative Methods for Public Administration (ECN480/PUB580). His approach to teaching emphasizes the extensive use of real-world examples to help students understand how economic theory applies to the issues about which they are concerned. He cultivates a relaxed atmosphere in his classes, whether in person or virtually, and he demonstrates enthusiasm for the topics, which he reports “rubs off on the students and makes them interested as well.” Student evaluations are outstanding across the board, with the average score on “Overall, this was an excellent course” across his courses is 4.61 on a 5-point scale for his two most recent years of teaching. Professor Douglas has maintained this outstanding record of student and peer evaluations all while deftly moving his traditional in-person courses to online asynchronous formats with recorded lectures as a result of the pandemic. He maintains a traditional teaching structure with lectures, homework exercises, a midterm, and a final examination in each of his courses. He regularly provides formal academic advising to majors, has produced his program’s annual student outcomes assessment report since 2014, and has worked to update the current BA and BS majors in economics to ensure alignment in mathematics prerequisites for students wanting to pursue graduate students.

Research: Professor Douglas is a quantitative economist whose research focuses on two broad areas: oil and gasoline price dynamics and analysis of current affairs from an economic perspective (which has included the economics of smoking bans, market efficiency tests for sports betting, and the effects of the Flint Water Crisis on bars and restaurants). Since his last promotion, Professor Douglas has published five journal articles, nine book reviews, and 15 conference papers. Two of his journal articles appear in A* or A rated journals according to the ADBC (Australian Deans Business Council) ranking system. His 2019 publication in *Energy Economics* is a journal whose impact factor is at the 96th percentile, while his *Economics Letters* publication in 2014 was in the 93rd percentile. Professor Douglas’ other three publications are in journals whose impact factors place the journals above the 50th percentile of ranked journals per the Research Papers in Economics Impact Factor ranking system. Professor Douglas has

described a clear future research agenda that involves continuations of both of his lines of research. He has a journal article under review at *Energy Economics* and has four other working papers in various stages of development on topics ranging from oil and gas pricing, to macroeconomic effects of sports stadiums and sports coaching decisions.

Professor Douglas has also been involved in public policy work as a result of his affiliation with the Mackinac Center for Public Policy as a member of their Board of Scholars, having authored four policy papers. Since joining UM-Flint in 2007, Professor Douglas has authored more than 85 opinion-editorial (op-ed) pieces, including over 50 columns for the *My City Magazine* on various topics of economic interest to our region of Michigan, and has participated in over 65 community speaking engagements ranging from invited lectures at universities, to Rotary clubs, to testimony with the Michigan House of Representatives Transportation Committee. The sheer volume of this corpus of civically engaged scholarship and media interviews, which have been picked up by larger outlets including the *Detroit News* and the *Los Angeles Times*, are an outstanding example of public scholarship and should be duly commended.

Recent and Significant Scholarly Activity:

“The Impact of the Flint Water Crisis on Restaurants,” (with Amelia Biehl). *International Journal of Applied Economics* 16 (2019, No. 2), 36-42.

“Testing for Asymmetric Responses in the Retail Gasoline Supply Chain,” (with Don Bumpass, Vance Ginn, and Mark Tuttle). *Energy Economics* 83 (2019), 311-318.

“Committee Bias and Market Inefficiency, Evidence from the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament,” *Journal of Economic Insight* 40 (2015, No. 2), 1-17.

Service: Professor Douglas has amassed an extensive and productive record of service and leadership spanning his department, college, university, and profession. At the college level, he has served three terms on the college’s Executive Committee, as chairperson of the Department of Economics, and as chairperson of Faculty Council. Beyond campus, Professor Douglas has served his community faithfully as a city councilmember for the city of Grand Blanc, as a co-editor of the *Journal of Economic Insight*, since 2017, and as an Executive Committee member and then president of the Missouri Valley Economics Association. He has provided over 300 media interviews to print, radio, and television outlets since arriving at UM-Flint over 13 years ago – a task which he willingly engages in to “demonstrate to the public that the work academics do is important and relevant.” The value of Professor Douglas’ various forms of leadership and service has been clearly supported by participants who benefitted from his service activities.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “I find that Professor Douglas has established a coherent research agenda, and that he has a consistent record of publication. He addresses research questions with a variety of appropriate economic techniques.”

Reviewer B: “Dr. Douglas also has two publications in *Energy Economics*, which is similarly ranked in the top quartile of economics journals.”

Reviewer C: “His papers on the Flint water crisis and the smoking bans in restaurants shows his ability to address hot topics quickly and carefully.”

Reviewer D: “Dr. Douglas’s work on oil and gasoline pricing, both solely-authored and jointly-authored,

is particularly noteworthy. These papers each provide a significant contribution to the literature on various microeconomic facets of the market for crude oil and refined gasoline.”

Reviewer E: “Dr. Douglas has an impressive record of research in the areas of applied macroeconomics, energy economics, public finance, and sports economics...his research papers have appeared in prestigious economics journals such as the Journal of Applied Econometrics, Energy Economics, and Economics Letters.”

Reviewer F: “I have always been impressed by both the quality of Dr. Douglas’ research and by his presentation of his research. My personal favorites were the papers he presented on retail gasoline pricing and on the macroeconomic effects of sport stadiums.”

Reviewer G: “He has addressed several interesting questions in health economics (on smoking and the recent water crisis in Flint) and in sports economics. Dr. Douglas’s contributions to the respective literatures are substantive.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Douglas is a passionate, skillful and effective teacher who has adapted his on-ground teaching methods to fully online methods with apparent ease. His teaching methods and his scholarly pursuits are accessible to his undergraduate and occasional graduate students. He is advancing the economics community’s understanding of oil and gasoline price dynamics and in publishing in top tier venues. He also has an outstanding record of impactful service to his department, college, university, profession, and broader community. It is with the support of the College of Arts and Sciences Executive Committee that I recommend Chris C. Douglas for promotion to professor of economics, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, 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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