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

Christopher Fariss, assistant professor of political science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of political science, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:
Ph.D.     2013     University of California, San Diego
M.A.      2007     University of North Texas
B.A.      2005     University of North Texas

Professional Record:
2019–present     Faculty Associate, Donia Human Rights Center (DHRC), University of Michigan
2019–present     Affiliated Faculty, Michigan Institute for Data Science (MIDAS), University of Michigan
2016–present     Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Michigan
2016–present     Faculty Associate, Center for Political Studies (CPS), Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
2015–2016        Jeffrey L. Hyde and Sharon D. Hyde and Political Science Board of Visitors Early Career Professor in Political Science, Department of History, Pennsylvania State University
2013–2016        Assistant Professor, Department of History, Pennsylvania State University

Summary of Evaluation:
Teaching:  Professor Fariss has taught courses in data science, measurement, and the politics of human rights.  The undergraduate courses are designed around discovery, discussion, and doing.  Professor Fariss has a strong record of mentorship with undergraduates, of graduate students, of students whose committee he is on, and of students in wholly different fields than his.  He is generous with his time, open and available to students, and dedicated and detailed in his work with them.

Research:  Professor Fariss' work on the measurement of human rights practices challenges the conventional wisdom about a null or even negative relationship between human rights treaty membership and compliance.  Employing a dynamic item-response theory (IRT) model, Professor Fariss shows that the pattern of constant abuse found in human rights data reflects changing standards of accountability among monitoring agencies, and, once one accounts for these changes, physical integrity practices appear to have improved over time.  Many of the sources on which political conflict and violence data rely—whether media-generated or government-generated, electronic or archival—are biased or incomplete, which is highly consequential for statistical inference and hypothesis testing; the solution Professor Fariss proposed has created a much-needed conversation on the importance of taking these issues more

seriously and has re-set the standard for the field. Professor Fariss has helped Michigan become the leading center of empirical research on conflict, violence, and repression.

Recent and Significant Publications:
Slough, Tara and Christopher J. Fariss. "Misgovernance and Human Rights: Experimental Evidence of Illegal Detention without Intent." *American Journal of Political Science* 65, no. 1 (January 2021): 148-165.
Dancy, Geoff and Christopher J. Fariss. "From Hollow Hopes to Human Rights at Work: A Constitutive Approach to Human Rights in Global Society." *Law & Contemporary Problems* 81, no. 4 (December 2018): 773-100.
Fariss, Christopher J. "The Changing Standard of Accountability and the Positive Relationship between Human Rights Treaty Ratification and Compliance." *British Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 1 (January 2018): 239- 272.
Fariss, Christopher J. "Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time: Modeling the Changing Standard of Accountability." *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 2 (May 2014): 297-318.

Service: Professor Fariss has served on the Undergraduate Affairs Committee, the Rubin Speakers Series' coordinator, the Diversity Ally Committee, two tours on the Graduate Admission Committee, and most recently the Fulbright Interview Committee. He sits on the editorial board of one journal (*International Studies Review*) and was an editorial assistant on another (*International Studies Quarterly*). He is a council member in the leading research community on the topic of political conflict/violence and peace—the Peace Science Society (International). Professor Fariss also served as a section chair for the Human Rights Section of the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, and is an active and leading member of the CPRD research group at the University of Michigan.

External Reviewers:
Reviewer (A): "[Professor Fariss's] research has…been tremendously influential, particularly in determining trends and patterns of human rights violations over time…His work and related datasets have substantially shaped how quantitative human rights scholars think about and capture human rights violations."

Reviewer (B): "[Professor Fariss is]…one of the most careful and creative scholars working on measuring and understanding human rights in the international system."

Reviewer (C): "[Professor Fariss]…tied together theory, measurement, and inference in ways that are usually impossible."
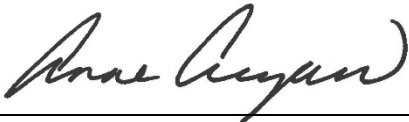
Reviewer (D): "[Professor Fariss] is able to address many complex endogeneity issues that have plagued previous work. His work is absolutely cutting-edge."

Reviewer (E): "[Professor Fariss's work] should serve as a stark reminder of the potential problem in inferring trends from data based on expert surveys."

Reviewer (F): "The work on human rights measurement…is an important contribution to the human rights field in its own right, with insights that are relevant to other areas in IR that involve behaviors that states would rather not be caught doing."

Summary of Recommendation:
Professor Fariss has developed an impressive research portfolio; his research is ambitious and impactful; his teaching is effective; he is a good citizen of the university. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Christopher Fariss be promoted to the rank of associate professor of political science, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.


Anne Curzan, Dean
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of
English Language and Literature, Linguistics,
and Education
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts




May 2023