

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

Ana Sabau Fernández, assistant professor of romance languages and literatures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of romance languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2014	Princeton University
M.A.	2011	Princeton University
B.A.	2008	Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico

Professional Record:

2015-present	Assistant Professor, Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
2014-2015	Assistant Professor, Department of Hispanic Studies, University of California-Riverside

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Sabau Fernández brings to the curriculum of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures her training in literary studies and her capacious approach to cultural history, working across the hemispheric Americas while principally centered in the Mexican context. She has made a particularly important contribution to the department's curriculum by creating courses that both incorporate historical material from the nineteenth century (her area of expertise) and making it accessible to undergraduate students in the department. Moreover, while grounded in literature, her courses are consistently interdisciplinary, combining performance, painting, cartography, journalism, and photography. Professor Sabau Fernández is a very successful classroom teacher who creates inclusive, vibrant teaching environments; she is also a valued mentor. She has served as the chair of one dissertation committee, as a member of five additional dissertation committees, and as the honor thesis faculty advisor for one undergraduate.

Research: Since completing her Ph.D. in Latin American literary and cultural studies at Princeton University, Professor Sabau Fernández completed a monograph that was recently published with University of Texas Press, and seven article-length pieces, two of which are published in top-ranking journals in the field, four in books, and one is under review. She also co-authored an article and a special issue of a leading journal, translated two articles, and published two open-access pieces, and she has presented her works at over thirty professional conferences and symposiums. Broadly considered, Professor Sabau Fernández's research interests are characterized by an interest in the ways that cultural analysis provides insight into politics and history. Her primary research is focused on nineteenth-century Mexico and the ways that written and visual texts allow us to see reconfigurations of colonialism and racialized attitudes and policies that have largely been disavowed by official versions of Mexican history, as well as contemporaneous resistance to them.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Riot and Rebellion in Mexico: The Making of a Race War Paradigm. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2022.

“Technologies of the Afterlife: Spiritualism and Social Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Mexico.” In *Utopias in Latin America: Past and Present*, edited by Juan Pro, 198-214. Eastbourne U.K.: Sussex Academic Press, 2018.

“Visiones micrológicas: la crónica como legado del ’68.” In *Hacia un Nuevo siglo (1968-2012): Tensiones, Territorios y Formas de un Campo Literario en Movimiento*, Vol. 3 of *Historia de las literaturas en México. Siglos XX y XXI*, edited by Miguel G. Rodríguez Lozano and Roberto Cruz Arzabal. Mexico City, Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2019.

Service: Since her arrival at the University of Michigan in 2015, Professor Sabau Fernández has established a strong record of service in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and in the university community as a whole. Within the department, she has served multi-year appointments as a member of the Executive Committee (Fall 2019-Winter 2021) and, more recently, the Graduate Committee (Fall 2022-Winter 2024). She has been actively involved in mentoring and advising both undergraduate and graduate students. She organized two public lectures for the department by major figures from the field of Latin American studies. Importantly, she has demonstrated consistent commitment to DEI initiatives through her participation in the Romance Languages and Literatures Diversity Committee (2016-2018, 2021-2023); the Romance Languages and Literatures committee for LSA Collegiate Post-doctoral Fellowship and Society of Fellows (2017-2018); and as a mentor for the Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program (MICHHERS) (2018, 2022).

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): “Professor Sabau’s greatest accomplishment to date is her book, *Riot and Rebellion*, a pathbreaking study of how rebellions late colonial period to the mid[-]19th century were recast by elites as ‘race wars.’”

Reviewer (B): “In its meticulous research, fluid conversation with a range of interlocutors in different fields, its ambition to bring more centrally into focus under-studied phenomena and materials and to change the conversation around race in Mexico, Sabau’s book resembles a second rather than first book project. I venture to guess that she will soon be—if she isn’t already—one of the top intellectuals working in the field of Mexican studies in the United States.”

Reviewer (C): “On top of her excellent scholarship and generous service to the profession, Professor Sabau is a kind person whom one looks forward to talking with and learning from in person. I can only imagine what a thoughtful and inspiring teacher she must be, given that I have learned something from every conversation I have had with her, and have seen her enliven rooms of scholars very much her senior without leaving behind, as it were, more junior scholars.”

Reviewer (D): “...it is my professional opinion that *Riots and Rebellion in Mexico* will capture interest and spark debate in both the US and Mexican academies. It is a material contribution to the history of race and racialization in Mexico.”

Reviewer (E): "...I am even more impressed with the quality and placement of her book chapters. Prof. Sabau has published an extraordinary number of excellent book chapters in outstanding anthologies edited by the top names in Latin American and Mexican literary and cultural studies. This is a rare achievement in such a [junior] scholar, and demonstrates an important recognition by senior Latin Americanists and Mexicanists of the originality, significance, and timeliness of Prof. Sabau's scholarship."

Reviewer (F): "The crown jewel of her research is her stunningly brilliant book *Riot and Rebellion in Mexico*. It is worth noting that although the seeds of this project are in her dissertation—which received an honorable mention from the Mexico section at LASA—the book is [a] much different endeavor, written on a different language, and of a much more ambitious scale. Although I would have been wary for an assistant professor to move so far away from her dissertation in most circumstances, I am convinced that she made the right call in writing a book that captures her brilliance and her painstakingly rigorous approach to research and writing. It is the kind of powerhouse book that matches the level of those written by scholars much more advanced by her."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Sabau Fernández has proven herself as an excellent scholar and a commendable teacher and member of the profession, both in and beyond the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Ana Sabau Fernández be promoted to the rank of associate professor of romance languages and literatures, 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

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