

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

Janum Sethi, assistant professor of philosophy, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of philosophy, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2015	University of California, Berkeley
B.A.	2005	Yale University

Professional Record:

2015-present Michigan	Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan
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Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Sethi is the main source for departmental instruction of Kant, and the record indicates that she has been able to clearly relate the exceptionally difficult views of this important philosopher at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Moreover, she has played a central role in the revision of the department's undergraduate curriculum in the history of philosophy by introducing a new 200-level survey of modern philosophy (PHIL 289) to replace the old upper-level survey course (PHIL 389). The new course has consistently achieved higher enrollments than its predecessor, and in contrast to the previous course, has reached lower-level students who desire an introductory survey before taking upper-level courses in philosophy. The course evaluations reflect the considerable student enthusiasm for the history of modern philosophy that Professor Sethi's instruction has inspired. Professor Sethi has also successfully taught core graduate courses and is a valued graduate student mentor.

Research: Professor Sethi is a scholar of Kant's theoretical philosophy who is recognized for her systematic consideration of relatively underexplored issues regarding his treatment of the subjective and empirical aspects of self-consciousness. She also has contributed work on Kant's accounts of the phenomenology of aesthetic judgment, the formation of empirical concepts, and the sources of prejudice that serves to reinforce and enrich her interpretation of his empirical psychology. Professor Sethi has published in generalist, highly ranked, philosophical journals—*Australasian Journal of Philosophy* and *Journal of Modern Philosophy*—as well as in specialist journals devoted to Kant, such as *Kantian Review* and *Kant Studien*.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Is it the Understanding or the Imagination that Synthesizes?” *Kant-Studien* 113, no.3 (2022): 535-554.

“Kant on Common Sense and Empirical Concepts.” *Kantian Review* 27, no. 2 (June 2022): 257-277.

“Kant on Empirical Self-Consciousness.” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (July 2021): 1-21.

“‘For Me in My Present State:’ Kant on Judgments of Perception and Mere Subjective Validity.”

Journal of Modern Philosophy 2, no. 9 (2020): 1-20.

“Two Feelings in the Beautiful: Kant on the Structure of Judgments of Beauty.” *Philosophers’*

Imprint 19, no. 34 (2019): 1-17.

Service: Professor Sethi has been a conscientious contributor to various departmental committees, including the Graduate Admissions Committee, the GSI Training and Evaluation Committee, and the Undergraduate Studies Committee. In addition, she has taken on significant “invisible” work that reflects a strong commitment to DEI. Such work has included regular meetings with women in the department’s graduate program applying for jobs for the first time, and informal advising for prospective graduate students who come from diverse backgrounds.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): “The quality of [Professor Sethi’s] publications is uniformly outstanding—every one of her publications makes a worthwhile, original, careful contribution.”

Reviewer (B): “[Professor Sethi] is an outstanding philosopher who is moving rapidly from strength to strength and will soon become a major figure in the field, regardless of cohort.”

Reviewer (C): “[Professor Sethi] has a unified, novel approach to Kant’s philosophical system, one that brings together key concepts and ideas in a fruitful, illuminating way.”

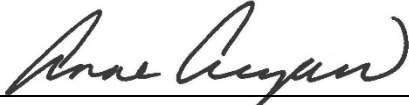
Reviewer (D): “Through the common theme of subjectivity, [Professor Sethi’s] essays also have a focus that would make it possible to compile the main results of [her] work to date in a book in the near future.”

Reviewer (E): “Against the tide, [Professor Sethi’s] work brings out the several ways in which what is ‘subjective,’ for Kant, often functions quite positively, whether as a first argumentative stepping-stone, or also as a highlighted point of shared agreement with his interlocutors (whether Descartes or Hume), which will ultimately yield interesting and unforeseen consequences.”

Reviewer (F): “In terms of quality, in certain respects [Professor Sethi’s] research displays some real virtues. She is clear about what she is doing and executes well (by constructing a sustained argument for whatever thesis she is advancing), albeit narrowly.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Sethi is recognized as a rigorous and creative scholar of Kant's theoretical philosophy and aesthetics, and she has provided excellent contributions through her teaching and service to the department, college, university, and profession. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Janum Sethi be promoted to the rank of associate professor of philosophy, 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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