

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

Laura Aull, associate professor of English language and literature, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of English language and literature, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2011	University of Michigan
M.A.	2006	University of Notre Dame
M.Ed.	2005	University of Notre Dame
B.A.	2003	University of Notre Dame

Professional Record:

2020-present	Associate Professor of English and Director, English Department Writing Program, University of Michigan
2017-2019	Associate Professor of English and Linguistics, Wake Forest University
2012-2019	Director, Directed Self-Placement, Wake Forest University
2011-2016	Assistant Professor of English, Wake Forest University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Aull has been an effective teacher of English linguistics and other related fields in English and writing studies. She consistently receives high marks on student evaluations, where rankings on a 0-5 scale are generally on the highest range (approaching high 4s and 5). Student comments on evaluation forms frequently note the time she takes to explain challenging concepts, her passion and excitement for her field, her care for students, her thoughtfulness in the design of her courses. Professor Aull has also played an active part in graduate mentoring and research. For a total of twenty students, she served as first-year research advisor (twice); research advisor (twice); second-year exam co-advisor; dissertation chair (twice); first-year co-advisor (four times); prospectus chair; and dissertation committee member (twice). As the director of the English Department Writing Program, Professor Aull has had a transformative effect on improving student success in our foundational writing courses.

Research: Professor Aull is a scholar of writing studies, where she does innovative work by bringing writing studies into closer relationship with linguistics. Specifically, she has demonstrated how empirical study of language and corpus linguistic analysis can inform larger questions about the quality, teaching, and assessment of writing, both in the present and the past. Her groundbreaking work has led to a strengthening of the relationship between the fields of writing studies and linguistics, and it has addressed multiple audiences, including secondary school teachers, college writing instructors, specialists in assessment, and the general public. Since her appointment as an associate professor, with tenure, at the University of Michigan, she has published two books and seven articles in peer-reviewed journals, along with eight chapters in book collections, all of which address the writing studies-linguistics relationship from multiple

angles. Professor Aull's books, articles, and chapters have solidified her position as a leader in the field of writing studies.

Recent and Significant Publications:

You Can't Write That...8 Myths about Correct English. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, in press.

How Students Write: A Linguistic Analysis. New York, NY: Modern Language Association, 2020.

"Student Interpretation and Use Arguments: Evidence-Based, Student-Led Grading." *Journal of Response to Writing* 8, no.2 (2022): Article 7.

"What is 'Good Writing'? Analyzing Metadiscourse as Civil Discourse." *Journal of Teaching Writing* 36, no. 1 (2022): 37-60.

Service: As the director of the English Department Writing Program (EDWP) over the past three and a half years, Professor Aull had and continues to have a major impact on the educational experience of Michigan students, both on an undergraduate and graduate level. The numbers are revealing and speak for themselves: 6,500 undergraduate students, 35 new Graduate Instructors (GSIs), and 55 returning GSIs in a typical year. She has exercised formidable leadership in working alongside the 30 lecturer faculty who are her colleagues in centralizing writing in the position it now plays in the completion of a Michigan degree. Writing has long been a priority on this campus, significantly connected to academic achievement and the very act of learning itself. Professor Aull's accomplishment lies in the conception, redevelopment and implementation of innovative strategies to meet the changing needs of the diverse demography that constitutes our student population today.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "In perusing [Professor Aull's] work, I was struck not only by the different audiences chosen but also by her fluent and effective ways of writing in various subgenres."

Reviewer (B): "Professor Aull's work is very carefully focused, and highly relevant to current discussions of the nature of language, offering appropriate evidence for the claims she makes."

Reviewer (C): "Since the pandemic, by my count, [Professor Aull] has published or has under contract two monographs, six articles, seven book chapters, a co-authored textbook, and three editorial contributions to *Assessing Writing*. This is an exceptional record, pandemic or not."

Reviewer (D): "Dr. Aull's scholarship provides substantive direction for designing curriculum and assessments that are responsive to and honoring of increasingly diverse college student populations in ways that do not conflate 'difference' and 'deficit.'"

Reviewer (E): "Her research is conducted rigorously and is published in high-ranking journals, attracting a fair number of citations."

Reviewer (F): “Dr. Aull is at the top of her field. She is exceptional for her ability to think carefully and clearly about data and theory, and to draw on each to inform the other. She is also exceptional for her ability to bridge typically isolated areas within the broad field of writing studies so that each ‘side’ might engage the other both civilly and productively. We need more scholars, teachers, and citizens like Dr. Aull.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Aull’s record in all three areas—research, teaching and leadership—has exceeded the norms that are typically expected for promotion. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Laura Aull be promoted to the rank of professor of English language and literature, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anne Curzan", is written over a horizontal line.

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 2024