

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

Simon S. Cushing, associate professor of philosophy, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences and Education, is recommended for promotion to professor of philosophy, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences and Education.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1999	University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA
M.A.	1989	Oxford University, Oxford England
B.A.	1989	Oxford University, Oxford England

Professional Record:

2005-Present	Associate Professor (with tenure), Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan
1999-2005	Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan-Flint, Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Since his promotion to associate professor, Professor Cushing has successfully taught over 20 distinct courses. These courses range widely from Introduction to Philosophy to Bioethics to Race, Gender and Sexuality. These courses were developed in both face-to-face and online formats. Professor Cushing's curricular development extends to other units, including the interdisciplinary development of a healthcare related certificate. Additionally, Professor Cushing serves multiple DEEP programs. He has been incredibly flexible in adjusting to the scheduling needs and the often-idiosyncratic requests of these programs.

Professor Cushing consistently assesses and adapts course materials to best meet the needs of students and ensure learning outcomes are achieved. This includes developing a visual basic program to check logic proofs and taking full advantage of the ODE studios. He has exhibited an extraordinary dedication and skill that has significantly impacted students. His pedagogical approach is deeply rooted in fostering critical and analytical thinking, encouraging students to explore complex philosophical concepts with clarity and depth. His remarkable ability to make challenging material accessible and engaging is evident from the consistently high evaluations he receives from students. Student ratings are positive across courses, modes and student populations and students recognize that he is well prepared and responsive.

In addition to preparing and delivering high quality courses, Professor Cushing serves as the advisor to the Philosophy Club and as a faculty advisor who regularly assists students in course and career planning. CASE academic advisors have praised his collaborative and helpful nature. Professor Cushing's commitment to teaching excellence is further demonstrated in assessment efforts. He has a strong record of contributing to assessment planning and has been deeply involved in analyses of related data. Together, these efforts have led to improved programming and student success.

Professor Cushing has a strong record of teaching excellence. This record, combined with a history of student mentoring, course development, advising and assessment efforts, exceeds the standard for promotion to professor in the area of teaching effectiveness.

Research: Professor Cushing exceeds the standards for scholarship. Professor Cushing's areas of specialization include social philosophy, political philosophy, and moral philosophy and applied ethics. Consistent with current recommendations in academia, the focus of his work has shifted from broader theoretical issues to more applied topics. Since earning tenure, he has produced twelve publications that include impactful articles, chapters and anthologies. The book, The Philosophy of Autism, opened unexplored avenues in philosophical research. Professor Cushing's versatility is shown through a range of topics, from free will to abortion to love. It is also shown in the delivery. His role in facilitating scholarly dialogues through interviews with philosophers in the *Journal of Cognition and Neuroethics* is impressive. The interviews were widely read and particularly useful in promoting philosophy to a broader audience. This aspect of Professor Cushing's work makes a significant contribution to the field. His scholarly work extends beyond publications as he regularly presents at professional conferences. In addition to many completed works, Professor Cushing has multiple works planned and in progress.

Recent and Significant Scholarly Activity:

“Why the wrongness of intentionally impairing children in utero does not imply the wrongness of abortion.” *J Med Ethics*, February 2023, Vol 49 No 2

New Philosophical Essays on Love and Loving (editor). 2021. London: Palgrave Macmillan

“Introduction.” In *Cushing 2021*

Service: Professor Cushing has amassed a record of impactful, high-quality service that spans many levels. He has worked collaboratively on course development, program revision, and interdisciplinary certificates. Professor Cushing is a teacher first. This is demonstrated in his service to the Academic Standards Committee and Student Relations Advisory Board. His work as the department chair, a member of the CASE Executive Committee, and more recently as the program director, has promoted academic collaborations that benefit students and faculty.

Professor Cushing's has cross-campus service. He is the only UM-Flint member on the executive committee of the UM Faculty Senate. He has also served on multiple university level sub-committees. These roles assist in addressing a variety of needs and create an important bridge between campuses. Professor Cushing's professional service is vast and includes serving as a reviewer for journals and conferences. He has also successfully organized a conference and is deeply engaged in the work of the Center for Cognition and Neuroethics. The center promotes philosophical research as well as making it accessible to a wider audience.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): “He has a tremendous scope and, through as much as he knows about distinct philosophical arguments, ancient and contemporary, his writing is soothingly confident and accurate.”

Reviewer (B): “Dr. Cushing's questions and his own comments are outstanding and are strong evidence of a first-rate intellect and an admirable knowledge of current work in several areas of philosophy.”

Reviewer (C): “I was particularly impressed by Dr. Cushing’s work in the philosophy of religion, an area of expertise for me, and by his nuanced approach to the debate involving realist and eliminativist positions with respect to autism.”

Reviewer (D): “Cushing has, thus, compiled a substantial body of work that makes important contributions to philosophy, has appeared in a range of respectable venues, is important work that ought to be engaged by scholars pursuing similar topics in their research, and bodes well for his future research productivity.”

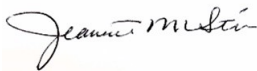
Reviewer (E): “As to quality, Cushing’s two papers on the nature of autism are both significant works of scholarship.”

Reviewer (F): “He is sharp as a tack, interested in a broad range of important topics, and terrifically intellectually nimble.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Cushing’s exemplary career in the College of Arts, Sciences and Education stands as a testament to his profound impact in academia. He is a versatile teacher who continues to innovate. He clearly cares about his students and strives to elevate his pedagogy whenever possible. As a highly productive scholar, he has distinguished himself with significant contributions that have opened new avenues in philosophical discourse. There is a strong record of service that represents a balance across levels. It is with the full, enthusiastic support of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education Executive Committee that I recommend Simon S. Cushing for promotion to professor of philosophy, with tenure, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences and Education.

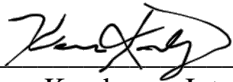
Recommended by:



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Jeannette Stein, Interim Dean  
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

Recommendation endorsed by:



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Yener Kandogan, Interim Dean  
School of Management and Interim  
Provost and Vice Chancellor  
for Academic Affairs



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Donna Kay Fry, Interim Chancellor  
University of Michigan-Flint

May 2024