

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Cathlyn Newell, associate professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, is recommended for promotion to professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

Academic Degrees:

M.Arch.	2006	Rice University, Houston, TX
B.Arch.	2003	Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA

Professional Record:

2017 – Present	Associate Professor of Architecture, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2016 – 2021	Director, Master of Science in Digital and Materials Technologies, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2011 – 2017	Assistant Professor of Architecture, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2010 – 2011	Lecturer I, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2010 – Present	Founding Principle, Alibi Studio, Detroit, MI
2009 – 2010	Williard A. Oberdick Fellow, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2006 – 2009	Project Designer, Office dA, Boston, MA

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Newell has made extensive contributions to the college as an educator. She imparts knowledge at both graduate and post-graduate levels through studios and seminars, focusing on four thematic categories and approaches: on-site, collaboration/expertise, light qualities, and prototyping. Going beyond traditional teaching methods, she seamlessly integrates her research and creative practice into her pedagogy, providing students with a holistic understanding of context, circumstance, and siting. What sets Professor Newell apart is her remarkable ability to connect her creative practice with her teaching, inspiring students to produce independent work. Serving as the director of the Master of Science in Digital and Material Technologies, she played a key role in designing the program. Under her leadership in 2019, the program received the Association for Computer-Aided Design in Architecture Innovative Academic Program Award of Excellence, showcasing her impactful contributions to education and program development.

Research and Creative Practice: Professor Newell’s research and creative endeavors explore the intricacies of spaces and material effects, with a primary focus on cultivating atmospheres through the exploration of textures, volumes, and the nuanced interplay of light or its absence. Her work delves into the ecological and psychological implications of darkness on our surroundings and well-being, exploring the emotional resonance embedded in the design of materials and space. Widely recognized and published, Professor Newell has showcased her work on both national and international platforms. Notably, her seminal works “Secret Sky” and “Long Range” garnered acclaim from esteemed panels, securing accolades such as the Architizer A+Award (2022) and the

R+D Architect Magazine Award (2022) in collaboration with Wes McGee and Zackery Belanger. Her contributions were further acknowledged with an Azure AZ Award of Merit and People's Choice Award (2021). In 2020, she was also honored with the prestigious WOJR/Civitella Ranieri Architecture Prize. Professor Newell's ongoing research has received substantial funding from internal competitions and external sponsors, including Guardian Glass, Michigan Arts and Culture Council, and the Glanz Family Foundation. This extensive research has led to the filing of three pending patents. Additionally, Professor Newell has been distinguished as a Lucas Fellow, a fellow of the American Academy in Rome, and a Detroit Kresge Artist Fellow.

Recent and Significant Publications, Exhibitions, and Awards:

Newell, Catie. "Material Lives," Imaginaries on Matter – Tools, Materials, Origins, ed. Thomas Bo Jensen, Carolina Dayer, Jonathan Foote, *Art Architecture Design Research*, (2023), 199-208.  
Newell, C., Belanger, Z. & McGee, W. Shaping Glass for Acoustic Performance, *Glass Structures & Engineering*, (2022) 7, 253–265. *Architect Magazine*, R+D Award, Long Range, 2022  
Architizer, A+Awards, Architecture+Light, Jury Award, Secret Sky, 2022 WOJR/Civitella Ranieri Architecture Prize, 2020 Association for Computer-Aided Design in Architecture (ACADIA), Innovative Academic Program Award of Excellence, 2019

Service: Professor Newell has demonstrated exceptional service contributions throughout her academic career. At the program level, she served as the director of the Master of Science in Digital and Material Technologies program from 2016 to 2021, playing a pivotal role in its design. Engaging in various program committees, including faculty search, Promotion and Tenure, and Lecturers and Exhibitions, she showcased her commitment to program development and governance. On the college level, she was elected to serve on the Executive Committee, contributing to broader institutional decision-making. She also served as a faculty mentor in the Equity in Architectural Education Mentors Program, a collaborative initiative aimed at addressing fabrication waste and promoting equity for underrepresented groups in architecture programs. Beyond the academic realm, she has extended her service to the professional community by participating in many conferences, panels, and award juries.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Newell has been successful as a researcher, as demonstrated by a good number of publications and research funding...she developed much of her work at her Alibi Studio (since 2010) creating installations and exhibitions on the theme of light, traces, and memory. She then brings this valuable experience to her teaching at Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning and the MS Digital and Material Technologies Program."

Reviewer B: "Her work as a professional and academic is robust...her national and international reputation is based on her development of a critical body of work."

Reviewer C: "Professor Newell's research/creative work certainly meets qualitatively high standards. She has developed a strategy, or a field of inquiry that maps new means to critique and analyze the given along with a prognosticating view to the unseen, or perhaps better thought as the not-yet-seen...the work is rigorous with respect to technique, process, critical inquiry, methodologies, and creative vision."

Reviewer D: “Newell continues to produce accomplished, beautifully detailed precisely documented work focusing on materiality and fabrication of light (and darkness); and has successfully been engaged in a research practice along with her teaching and service at Michigan. It is important to note that her work has continued to grow in maturity and ambition.”

Reviewer E: “Not only are Catie’s scholarly and creative pursuits operating at the highest levels, but her teaching and academic achievements are second to none.”

Reviewer F: “The strengths of the candidate are in several examples of her creative work. The ‘Secret Sky’ project is quite impressive and has won a number of awards. It has received considerable positive press. It is an excellent exemplar of her research interests and her teaching. It is exceptionally important. Her teaching and service are solid, and her research and creative work are admirable.”

Reviewer G: “The scholarship she produces is of an exceedingly high quality and makes such important contributions to contemporary discourse...this positions Professor Newell as an invaluable voice in redefining the value of what we contribute to culture and society as architects.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Newell is an educator and practitioner known for her creativity, rigor, and innovation. Her scholarship has garnered international acclaim, earning recognition from peers and solidifying her position as a significant and impactful teacher. Beyond her role within the institution, she has made substantial contributions to advancing the discipline through dedicated service both within and outside academic boundaries. It is with the support of the Taubman College Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Executive Committee that I recommend Cathlyn Newell for promotion to professor of architecture, with tenure, A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.



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Jonathan Massey  
Dean and Professor  
A. Alfred Taubman College of  
Architecture and Urban Planning

May 2024