

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
MEDICAL SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY

Courtney A. Polenick, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry, Medical School, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of psychiatry, with tenure, Department of Psychiatry, Medical School.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2016	Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
M.S.	2011	Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH
B.A.	2007	Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH

Professional Record:

2018 – present Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Dr. Polenick is a dedicated and talented teacher. Learners include post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduate students through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), with most of these individuals having published. Nationally, she developed a mentoring matching program for the American Psychological Association and mentors a few individuals each year through this program. She is a frequent lecturer for the Impact of Chronic Conditions on Individuals and Couples in Midlife and Later Life course (SW690). Institutionally, Dr. Polenick facilitates group discussions for M2 and M3 Geriatric Psychiatry Lectures and lectures on family caregiving to psychiatry residents for the Geriatric Core Lecture Series. Teaching evaluations are very good to excellent and trainees commented on her engaging, interactive teaching style.

Research: Dr. Polenick's research focuses on later-life family relationships and caregiving. She focuses on understanding how complex care, such as dementia, influences older couples and developing interventions to aid in the maintenance of the well-being of both partners. She has been well funded for this work by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Alzheimer's Association. She is currently supported as the principal investigator on an NIH K01, an NIH R01, an NIH P30 subproject, and a foundation grant. She is also a co-investigator on two NIH R01's and one NIH P30 award. She has authored 61 peer reviewed manuscripts in excellent journals, such as *Gerontologist* and the *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*. She has been invited on nine occasions to present her work nationally. In 2019, Dr. Polenick was a selected participant (one of ten junior researchers nationally) for the NIH/NIA-funded Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN) – Older American Independence Centers (OAICs) AGING Initiatives Multiple Chronic Conditions (MCCs) Scholars Program.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- Polenick CA, Perbix EA, Salwi SM, Maust DT, Birditt KS, Brooks JM, “Loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic among older adults with chronic conditions,” *J Appl Gerontol.* 40(8): 804-813, 08/2021. PM33641513/PMC8238795
- Polenick CA, Birditt KS, Turkelson A, Perbix EA, Salwi SM, Zarit SH, “Daily social interactions and HPA axis activity among midlife and older adults,” *Gerontologist.* 61(6): 897-906, 08/2021. PM33367791/PMC8361500
- Polenick CA, Birditt KS, Turkelson A, Bugajski BC, Kales HC, “Discordant chronic conditions and depressive symptoms: Longitudinal associations among middle-aged and older couples,” *J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci.* 76(3): 451-460, 02/2021. PM31792532/PMC7887728
- Polenick CA, Min L, Kales HC, “Medical comorbidities of dementia: Links to caregivers’ emotional difficulties and gains,” *J Am Geriatr Soc.* 68(3): 609-613, 03/2020. PM31746461/PMC7354235
- Polenick CA, Cotton BP, Bryson WC, Birditt KS, “Loneliness and illicit opioid use among methadone maintenance treatment patients,” *Subst Use Misuse.* 54(13): 2089-2098, 06/2019. PM31232142/PMC6803066

Service: Dr. Polenick has an extensive and impressive service portfolio. Internationally, she has served on four international grant review panels, including the Israel Science Foundation Personal Research Grants and the Czech Science Foundation Experimental Development and Innovation to Support Basic Research Grant Projects panels. Regionally and nationally, she is an organizer of the Michigan Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center Leaders Initiative Seminar series and served in elected office as the secretary and as a member at large for the American Psychological Association (APA). She has done extensive service for the APA, including on the Early Career Task Force on Adult Development and Aging, as a reviewer for the Baltes Distinguished Research Achievement Award, the M. Powell Lawton Distinguished Contribution Award, and the Mentorship Award in Aging. She is on the editorial board of *The Gerontologist* and was a guest editor for an issue of *PLoS One*. She has been an ad hoc reviewer for several NIH and Alzheimer’s Association grant review panels. Institutionally, she is currently the co-chair of the Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation Aging Research Network and has reviewed applications for training grant positions, served on an internal grant review panel, organized a virtual grand rounds series, and serves on the research council for the psychiatry department.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “In terms of the quantity of her work, her CV indicates that she has published a total of 61 publications – quite a prodigious number for the stage in her career, certainly by my institution’s standards as well. In acknowledgment of the value of multi-disciplinary team science, my institution considers having published ≥ 10 papers as first, second, or last/senior author since their appointment as Assistant Professor as meritorious of promotion to Associate Professor. This is a criterion that Dr. Polenick exceeds with well over 20 publications using this definition of significant authorship.”

Reviewer B: “Dr. Polenick has excelled in securing extramural grant funding at this early stage of her career, which augurs well in the future growth of her independent scholarly research program. She has held a NIA K01 until very recently and she leveraged this career development award into a very highly scored R01 proposal that is likely to be funded. She is currently a Co-Investigator on

two other R01 grants as well as a Co-Investigator in the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, and it appears has multiple other multi-year, R-level proposals under review on which she is a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator. This is a highly productive record of extramural funding."

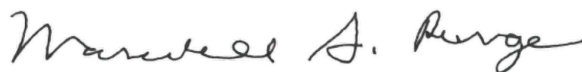
Reviewer C: "Dr. Polenick is showing many other indications of unusual and impressive national prominence for an Assistant Professor. Membership on the Editorial Board of the journal *The Gerontologist*, the flagship journal of the Gerontological Society of America for studies of applied aging research, is quite impressive. She has also shown impressive leadership and national visibility by having been elected Secretary of APA Division 20 (Adult Development and Aging), the major research division of the APA. She has also been asked to complete multiple reviews for the National Institute on Aging, Alzheimer's Association, and a number of international organizations."

Reviewer D: "...Dr. Polenick clearly has demonstrated that she has the abilities and expertise to build a focused and influential research program. She has attained both a national and international reputation for her research and methodological excellence and a high level of productivity. Her efforts have advanced the field conceptually and methodologically, and have application for practitioners working with older adults, their families, and their caregivers."

Reviewer E: "Dr. Polenick has been awarded 12 grants, including 7 that are currently active. She is PI of two of these grants: a \$3.64M grant from NIH/NIA on the daily experiences of couples living with early-stage dementia and an almost \$200K grant from the Alzheimer's Association to study black caregivers' daily experiences and sleep in dementia care dyads. Her impressive track record as an eight-time NIH investigator/co-investigator reflects her unique ability to pinpoint key issues and questions in the field of gerontology and break new ground regarding those topics."

Summary of Recommendation:

Dr. Polenick is a rising star in the field of geriatric psychiatry and is an effective educator, productive scientist, and highly engaged institutional citizen. I am pleased to recommend Courtney A. Polenick, Ph.D. for promotion to associate professor of psychiatry, with tenure, Department of Psychiatry, Medical School.



Marschall S. Runge, M.D., Ph.D.
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs
Dean, Medical School

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