

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Social Work

Anao Zhang, assistant professor of social work, School of Social Work, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2018	The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas
M.S.W.	2012	University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
LL.B.	2010	Fudan University, Shanghai, China

Professional Record:

2019 - present	Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Michigan
2018 - 2019	Research Fellow, School of Social Work, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation

Teaching: Professor Zhang has made significant contributions to instructional teaching through courses in both the M.S.W. and Joint Ph.D. programs, bringing deep practice experience to the classroom and excelling in teaching courses designed for students with career interests in interpersonal practice in integrated health and mental health. At the Ph.D. level, Professor Zhang designed and offered an advanced statistical analysis course that draws not only School of Social Work students but also students from other disciplines. Across all of these courses, his student teaching evaluations are stellar. Professor Zhang takes advising and mentoring of students at both the M.S.W. and doctoral levels very seriously. One clear example is his leadership of the field education experience for M.S.W. students at the AYA Oncology Program at the Rogel Cancer Center. Professor Zhang has engaged in mentoring 10 doctoral students, and he provides publication opportunities to these students consistently.

Research: Professor Zhang's research focuses on the physical and mental health ramifications of cancer diagnosis and survivorship among adolescents and young adults (AYA) (ages 15-39). These young people commonly experience distress, depression, anxiety, and social isolation from their peers - which, unfortunately, can culminate in treatment cessation or other negative outcomes such as suicide. Professor Zhang's work centers on preventing this cascade of negative outcomes by developing interventions tailored to the context of cancer among AYA populations. His research program consists of a coherent set of scholarship areas that spans the identification of social determinants of health among AYA with cancer; critical review of existing interventions for AYA cancer patients and survivors, and developing and evaluating evidence-supported interventions with an eye toward technology-aided approaches that can easily be deployed in cost effective ways.

Professor Zhang has pursued these lines of inquiry with the support of more than a million dollars in grants (internal and external) that he has garnered from foundations and from the Rogel Cancer Center at Michigan Medicine, as well as a federal grant from the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). He exhibits an outstanding rate of productivity in scholarship, accruing 66 peer reviewed articles in high impact journals both within and outside social work. Professor Zhang's work is highly cited, with a current (February 2024) citation count of over 1300 and an h-index of 18, comparable to that of many professors in the field of social work. His extensive record of presentation at conferences and other venues ensures that his work is being disseminated by agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and used to advance cancer care for the AYA population.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- Zhang, A., Kamat, A., Acquati, C., Aratow, M., Kim, J., DuVall, A. S., & Walling, E. (2023). Evaluating the feasibility and acceptability of an artificial intelligence (AI-) enabled and speech-based distress screening mobile app for adolescents and young adults (AYAs) diagnosed with cancer: A study protocol. *Cancers*, 14(4), 914; <https://doi.org/10.3390/cancers14040914>
- Zhang, A., Weaver, A., Walling, E., Zebrack, B., Levin, N. J., Stuchell, B., & Himle, J. (2022). Evaluating an engaging and coach-assisted online cognitive behavioral therapy for depression among adolescent and young adult cancer survivors: A pilot feasibility trial. *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07347332.2021.2011530>
- Zhang, A. (2022). Solution-focused brief therapy for depression among adolescents and young adults with cancer: An open pilot trial. *Research on Social Work Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F104973152111062508>
- Zhang, A., Liu, C., Bornheimer, L., Solomon, P., Wang, K., & Morrow, S. (2019). The indirect effect of bullying on adolescent self-rated health through mental health: A gender specific pattern. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 104, 104385. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104385>
- Zhang, A., Wang, K., & DuVall, A. (2022). Examining the moderating role of education on the association between depression and self-rated health among cancer survivors: A population-based study. *Current Oncology*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/curroncol28050343>
- Zhang, A., Wang, K., & DuVall, A. (2022). Examining the moderating role of education on the association between depression and self-rated health among cancer survivors: A population-based study. *Current Oncology*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/curroncol28050343>

Service: Professor Zhang's service record is likewise exemplary. In addition to serving on assigned standing committees in the School of Social Work, he takes on additional assignments related to online course development and curricular leadership and oversight, including playing a lead role in the university's interprofessional education initiative. At the Rogel Cancer Center, he is highly engaged in community engagement efforts such as those aimed at recruiting young people into health careers. In the Ann Arbor community, he volunteers time on boards for two different community organizations. At the professional level, he is active in cancer-related professional societies, serves as an associate editor for three different journals, and is on three editorial boards. The breadth and significance of his service activities is remarkable for his career stage and presages greater leadership as his career progresses.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "I have no doubt that Dr. Zhang would meet the requirements for promotion to tenure at [my institution]. Michigan is fortunate to have him."

Reviewer (B): "I have been a tenure-track faculty member at three schools of social work for over 20 years, and Dr. Zhang's scholarship and productivity are more than I have seen for an Associate Professor applying for tenure and promotion. [His] research and service are worthy of receiving tenure and a promotion to Assistant [sic] Professor at the University of Michigan School of Social Work."

Reviewer (C): "In sum, I believe Dr. Zhang exceeds the criteria for promotion. His accomplishments would be viewed favorably at my institution and other peer institutions. I have no reservation in strongly recommending Dr. Zhang's promotion."

Reviewer (D): "In summary, Dr. Zhang has clearly excelled in the areas of research/scholarship, teaching, and service.... His publication history and grant record provide ample evidence of a well-established, focused, and productive research program with a growing national reputation in his research areas. Additionally, his dossier provides strong evidence of innovative and impactful teaching and mentoring of graduate and doctoral students, and invaluable service to the School of Social Work, The University of Michigan, the community, and the profession of social work itself. And finally, Dr.

Zhang's research record provides solid evidence of acceleration and sustainability beyond promotion to tenured Associate Professor."

Reviewer (E): "Taken together, Dr. Zhang has already led a productive and exciting academic career. He has surpassed University of Michigan's criteria for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, by demonstrating excellence in the areas of research, teaching, and service. The UM SSW is fortunate to retain such a prolific, service-oriented scholar, with innovative insights and deep commitment to public health. Dr. Zhang deserves full consideration for tenure and promotion."

Reviewer (F): "Without a shadow of doubt, Dr. Zhang meets and, in fact, exceeds the requirements for tenure and promotion at my institution. If there is anything that raises any type of concern, and it truly is a minor one, is Dr. Zhang's frequent self-citations. And if that is the only issue this reviewer finds, it reflects well on this candidate's tenure application. In closing, from the tenure materials I have reviewed, it is clearly apparent that Dr. Zhang will have continued and sustained career success going forward. Dr. Zhang has made significant contributions to the knowledge base regarding outcomes along the lifespan of adolescents and young adult cancer survivors. As stated earlier, Dr. Zhang's work is truly outstanding."

Reviewer (G): "With this initial track record, I am quite confident that Dr. Zhang would meet the requirements for promotion at my institution. I would also predict that he will continue to sustain a thriving level of significant and meaningful accomplishments in the years 11 to come."

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Zhang's record is remarkably strong in all areas, and his national reputation in the area of psychosocial oncology for adolescents and young adults with cancer is well established and positioned to grow in the future. Moreover, his work enables him to improve care for these adolescents and young adults through his intervention development efforts and his impact on the many students in social work and interprofessional education that he teaches. It is with the support of the School of Social Work Executive Committee that I recommend Anao Zhang for promotion to the rank of associate professor of social work, with tenure, School of Social Work.



Beth Angell
Dean and Professor of Social Work
School of Social Work

May 2024