

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

Laura Kay Kasischke, associate professor of English language and literature, with tenure, and associate professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of English language and literature, with tenure, and professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

M.F.A. 1987 University of Michigan
B.A. 1984 University of Michigan

Professional Record:

2008 – present Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature and the Residential College, University of Michigan
2005 – 2008 Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature and the Residential College, University of Michigan
2004 – 2005 Lecturer III, Department of English Language and Literature and the Residential College, University of Michigan
2000 – 2004 Member, Poetry and Fiction Faculty, Low-Residency MFA Program Warren Wilson College
1999 Writer in Residence, Western Michigan University
1992 – 2002 Instructor, Department of English, Washtenaw Community College

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Kasischke’s evaluation scores reflect her consistent success in teaching a mix of graduate and undergraduate creative writing workshops as well as small, intensive creative writing tutorials for Residential College undergraduates. Her investment in their studies and their returned esteem of her is confirmed by her receipt of the Class of 1923 Memorial Teaching Award (2008). Just as she excels in creating works in two genres, fiction and poetry, she is equally skilled in teaching both poetry and fiction students at the highest level. Since receiving tenure, she has supervised both fiction and poetry theses and taken a significant number of undergraduate advisees.

Research – Although it has only been three years since Professor Kasischke’s promotion to associate professor, she has been incredibly prolific. Five books have appeared or are scheduled to appear; a major movie has been made of her novel, *The Life Before Her Eyes*; she has been widely translated; and she has been honored with several prizes, including the J.S. Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship (2010), the United States Artist Fellowship (2008), and the Henry Russel Award (2009). She is equally adept at prose fiction and poetry. Although there are many novelists who publish poetry or poets who have produced a novel, Professor Kasischke has attained success in both areas, and her scholarship shows no sign of diminishing.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Space, in Chains, Copper Canyon, forthcoming April 2011.

Eden Springs, Wayne State University Press, 2010.

In a Perfect World, Harper Perennial, 2009 (French and Hebrew editions forthcoming).

Lilies Without, Ausable Press, 2007.

Service – Professor Kasischke has maintained an active and energetic record of service locally and nationally. At Michigan she has served on the graduate Master of Fine Arts (MFA) admissions committee nearly every year, during which time the average number of applications received has more than doubled. She has also served on the poetry faculty search committee for the Department of English, chaired the MFA Exam Committee, and served on the Hopwood Awards Committee. She has served as an advisory board member for Wayne State University Press, judged entries for numerous prizes, and given readings and lectures at other colleges and conferences.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Laura Kasischke seems to me one of the best poets now at work in the American language, as well as a remarkable writer of fiction: she seems to me *the* best, the most original, and the most emotionally compelling, among those poets of (more or less) her generation... ..*Fire & Flower* belongs on the short list of the best books of poems about parenthood by anyone anywhere, and the successor volumes, through *Lilies Without*, are simply some of the best books of their decade.”

Reviewer (B)

“Her productivity and commitment to excellence in the field is also to be noted here, teaching while producing eight noteworthy collections over a period of eighteen years makes it clear that Kasischke is as prolific as she is compelling.”

Reviewer (C)

“...Laura Kasischke is one of the most visionary and productive contemporary writers in the US. Her formal daring and lucid, lyrical prose has established her voice as one of the most distinctive of her generation. The novels are remarkable in their structural inventiveness, poetic language, and mysterious, defining violence. ... I've observed five poetry lectures given by Laura... The lectures were superb: scholarly, engaging, and complete. She is clearly an inspiring and dedicated teacher.”

Reviewer (D)

“...Laura Kasischke does not do anything, whether it be writing, teaching, or editing, by half-measures. Her impressive productivity is never at the expense of quality. ...both her poetry and her fiction continue to mature and deepen. Put simply, it is Laura Kasischke's ideal combination of productivity and quality, and the recognition it has earned, that makes it an easy call to support her promotion to full professor.”

Reviewer (E)

“Kasischke’s work is of the highest order, whether she is aiming herself in the direction of her fiction writing or her poetry. She brings to each genre a passionate and unique arsenal of lyric intensity. It is her gift, her genius, to be able to create a timely and timeless imagistic world.”

Reviewer (F)


“Her work has always been restlessly associative, given to striking imagery, quirky and serendipitous moments of insight, and a sort of oddness of perception that can veer without warning from absurdist humor to pathos. Every emotion conveyed in the poems threatens to without warning turn into its opposite.”

Reviewer (G)

“...Kasischke is a gifted and authoritative voice in American poetry. ...She takes her place in her generation with real poise and a compelling voice, reaching across genres and opening new registers of style and [idiom]....”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Kasischke remains inventive and prolific writer of poetry and prose. She has also maintained a teaching record of notable range and distinction to which her numerous awards attest. Furthermore, she has actively and energetically served the department and the community. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Laura Kay Kasischke be promoted to the rank of professor of English language and literature, with tenure, and professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History and Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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