

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan-Dearborn
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters
Department of Natural Sciences

Approved by the Regents
May 14, 2009

David J. Susko, assistant professor of biological sciences, Department of Natural Sciences, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of biological sciences, with tenure, Department of Natural Sciences, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.

Academic Degrees

Ph.D. 1998 University of Windsor, Windsor, ON, Canada
B.Sc. 1993 University of Windsor, Windsor, ON, Canada

Professional Record

2003 – Present Assistant Professor of Biology, Department of Natural Sciences,
University of Michigan-Dearborn.
2000 – 2003 Adjunct Professor/ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Biology
Sciences, University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada
1998 – 2000 Postdoctoral Research Associate, Department of Crop Science, North
Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.
1998 Instructor, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Windsor,
Windsor, ON, Canada

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Susko's teaching is rated excellent. In recognition of his excellence in teaching he was awarded the University of Michigan-Dearborn Distinguished Teaching Award (untenured category) in 2008. Professor Susko primarily teaches two upper-level biology courses in the concentration requirement area of Organismal Biology (Plant Biology and Plant Physiology, both of which have lecture and laboratory components). He has also taught laboratories in Introduction to Organismal and Environmental Biology and the capstone Biology Seminar. Professor Susko has developed and taught two graduate courses for the M.S. in environmental science program. He has developed an articulate statement of his teaching objectives and goals, and ways of achieving them. His students uniformly commend his patience, willingness to help and overall skill in teaching. He has involved many undergraduate students in research and several are co-authors on publications. Students enthusiastically and consistently praise Professor Susko's efforts as a teacher/scholar.

Research: Professor Susko's research is rated excellent. He is an evolutionary plant ecologist with interests in how natural selection affects fitness for plant reproduction. By extension, many of his studies focus on maternal effects upon seeds and subsequent development of progeny plants. His research publications and conference proceedings in population and plant ecology have regularly involved undergraduate students; nineteen undergraduates have participated in his research to date. His research productivity is strong and there is no doubt it will continue.

Recent and Significant Publications:

- D.J. Susko and B. Superfisky, "A comparison of artificial defoliation techniques using canola (*Brassica napus*)," *Plant Ecology*, (July 16, 2008).
- D. J. Susko and Y. Hussein, "Factors affecting germination and emergence of dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)," *Weed Science*, 56, 389-393 (2008).
- D. J. Susko and M. Clubb, "Pollination effects on patterns of ovule fate in *Hesperis matronalis* (Brassicaceae)," *Botany*, 86, 466-474 (2008).
- D.J. Susko and P.B. Cavers, "Seed-size effects and competitive ability in *Thlaspi arvense*. (Brassicaceae)," *Botany* 86, 259-267 (2008).
- K.D. Tungate, M.G. Burton, D.J. Susko, S.M. Sermons, and T.Q. Rufty, "Altered weed reproduction and maternal effects under low-nitrogen fertility," *Weed Science*, 54, 847-853 (2006).
- D.J. Susko, "Effect of ovule position on patterns of seed maturation and abortion in *Robinia pseudoacacia* (Fabaceae)," *Canadian Journal of Botany*, 84, 1259-1265 (2006).
- Christov, R.M. Korol, E. Dai, L. Lis, H. Guan, M.A. Bernards, P.B. Cavers, D. Susko, and A. Lucas, "In vivo optical analysis of quantitative changes in collagen and elastin during arterial remodeling," *Photochemistry and Photobiology*, 81, 457-466 (2005).
(undergraduate student co-authors are underlined)

Service: Professor Susko's service is rated excellent. At the campus level he has served on Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate Council, Research Support Committee, and the Graduate Board. Within the department, he has served on faculty search committees, the Environmental Science Graduate Program Committee, Department Grievance Committee and as senate liaison to the Natural Sciences Department Executive Committee. Professionally he has served as a manuscript reviewer for fifteen different research publications including, *Annals of Botany*, *Canadian J. of Forest Research*, *Canadian J. of Plant Science*, *Evolution*, *Int. J. of Plant Sciences*, and *Natural Areas Journal*, *Oecologia*, *Plant Ecology*, and *Seed Science Research*

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "The papers I evaluated are uniformly well-written, and they appear in strong and well-regarded journals. *Weed Science* and *Canadian Journal of Botany* are venues which make his work widely available to an appropriate audience of professionals in the field. I found Dr. Susko's papers to be tightly organized, focused clearly on particular questions of broad interest."

Reviewer B: "He has been able to establish himself as a solid, consistent scientist who has good ideas and does very good research. Dr. Susko's approach, i.e., looking at the maternal effects on competitive ability of weeds, is different from that of many of his peers, and it promises to be a productive area of research for many years to come."

Reviewer C: "The recently accepted paper [in *Plant Ecology*] on simulated herbivory challenges an assumption made by most researchers using artificial defoliation techniques – that the pattern of defoliation doesn't matter. Susko and Superfisky clearly demonstrate that the pattern, though not the amount, of damage affects plant fitness, and this should be a wake-up-call to those in the field. His research productivity remains steady."

Reviewer D: “Dr. Susko’s research is of extremely high quality. I am most impressed at Dr. Susko’s ability to integrate the empirical and the theoretical. He is an authority on angiosperm reproductive biology, particularly seed ecology as well as development.”

Reviewer E: “His recent work addressing the effects of mating systems on patterns of ovule fate is especially promising (Susko and Clubb 2008; Botany 86). This work highlights another important direction of his work, i.e., addressing seed development germination in weedy and invasive species...I predict that this will be a ‘growth direction’ for his research program...”

Reviewer F: “I would consider several of his papers to be among the best in his area of research specialization. I think that Dr. Susko’s potential for continued research in the future at the same level of productivity is high.”

Reviewer G: “Dr. Susko has clearly mastered the fine art of mentoring undergraduates in successful research. The 2008 Susko and Clubb paper was one of the two strongest empirical studies I read from this collection, and provided some very interesting new insights into positional effects on the maturation and ultimate size of developing seeds.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Susko has demonstrated excellence in teaching and in his research, and has rendered valuable service to the Department of Natural Sciences, and the campus. We are very pleased to recommend, with the strong support of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters Executive Committee, David J. Susko for promotion to associate professor of biological sciences, with tenure, Department of Natural Sciences, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.



Kathryn Anderson-Levitt
Dean
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters



Daniel Little
Chancellor
University of Michigan-Dearborn

May 2009