



LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
Museum of Natural Science

15 November 2016

Biology Program
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Monroe, LA 71209

Dear Dr. Talbert:

I am writing to apply for the position of Assistant Professor in evolutionary biology at ULM. I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Biological Sciences and the Museum of Natural Science (LSUMNS) at Louisiana State University. I will defend my dissertation in April 2017 and receive my PhD on 4 August 2017. I will be available to start on 1 August 2017. My research focuses on phylogeography, systematics, and evolutionary history of salamanders in the southeastern U.S.

I am applying for this position because I want to teach and develop a research program in a student-centered university setting where I can use my research as a teaching tool to directly train students in lab- and field-based science. My desire to build a career in an environment that values quality teaching stems from my professional training in K-12 education. I enjoy guiding students in discovering new knowledge and mentoring them to become successful citizens and scientists. During my graduate training in biology, I have taught, mentored, and trained undergraduates pursuing a variety of career paths. I have four years of formal teaching experience as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Alabama and LSU, teaching labs, problem solving, and field experiences for human anatomy and physiology, introductory biology, genetics, and herpetology. In addition, I have given several guest lectures for evolution, anatomy and physiology, and herpetology.

I am especially excited about this position because ULM's location in the Coastal Plain and near the southern Appalachians is perfect for developing educational programs on salamanders of the Southeast. I grew up in the Southeast and have deep ties to the region. I would love to remain in the Southeast to share my fascination with the region's biodiversity with the students of ULM. During my six years as a resident of Baton Rouge, I have also developed a strong bond with the local communities of Louisiana – especially in the aftermath of the Baton Rouge flood, but also through talking with locals during my many academic and non-academic day trips around the state, such as outreach events with the LSUMNS, field work, or biking the Tammany Trace. I believe I could greatly contribute to the university's mission of preparing students to succeed in and contribute to the community of north Louisiana and their broader society.

I am also impressed by the ULM Museum of Natural History and would like to continue my work with specimen collections, begun during my PhD training at the LSUMNS, by utilizing and contributing to ULM's collection. My interests complement current research at ULM in systematics, evolution, and herpetology, providing potential opportunities for collaboration. In addition, my history of outreach with the LSUMNS and reviewing manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals, along with non-academic local community service (flood relief), demonstrates my commitment to service at my institution, the community where I live, and the wider scientific community.

I have attached my CV, teaching philosophy, research statement, a brief list of space and equipment needs, transcripts, information for references, and reprints of two publications. I would be happy to discuss this position further and provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

Catherine E. Newman