

September 2, 2015

To Whom it May Concern:

Dr. Alan Bergland has been appointed to the faculty at the University of Virginia as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology starting January 2016. He has an ambitious and exciting research agenda to unravel the genetic basis of rapid adaptive evolutionary change in two distinct species that each have seasonal fluctuations in selection pressure and show evidence of rapid adaptive evolution. His work will tackle one of the key questions for both evolutionary biologists as well as geneticists: what is the genetic architecture that underlies phenotypic variation in fitness traits? As he has already identified the relevant genetic variation in both taxa, Dr. Bergland is well positioned to tackle the phenotypic expression of this variation, its link to fitness and contribution to evolution in nature. This important research agenda informs the very platform on which our understanding of evolution in natural populations is based and will make important conceptual contributions to our understanding of the nature of genetic variation.

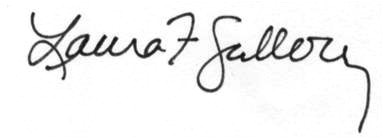
Dr. Bergland's appointment includes full office and laboratory space on the floor with the other evolutionary biologists in Gilmer Hall. To facilitate the growth and development of Dr. Bergland's research program, we have allocated $805,000 to be used for equipment, personnel and supplies at his discretion. We have also assigned Dr. Bergland two recently installed growth rooms for his personal use. In addition, Dr. Bergland will have access to all departmental and institutional core facilities, within the framework of the guidelines that govern their use. In particular, his lab is right across the hall from a shared genomics lab that houses genomics equipment from multiple labs and is available for departmental use. Finally, UVA’s Genomics Core Facility is just a couple of labs down the hall. The Genomics Core Facility enhances genomics capabilities at UVA by assisting with technique development and gathering of preliminary data both in model and non-model organisms.

Dr. Bergland plans to conduct his fieldwork local to UVA. The Charlottesville area is known for its orchards and Dr. Bergland has already collected local *Drosophila* stock that he is developing for experiments. Dr. Bergland will be carrying out his fieldwork at Morven Farm, a UVA facility close to the university. There are already fenced areas, water and vehicle access, and other resources for him to grow fruit trees and conduct experimental work studying allele/SNP frequencies *in situ*.

Located within one of our country's premier public universities, with a strong group of evolutionary biologists, the Biology Department at UVA provides an outstanding environment for Dr. Bergland's proposed research. He will also have the opportunity to develop close ties to other research programs that focus on genomics and physiology housed in the basic science departments at UVA’s School of Medicine. Dr. Bergland will have access to graduate students through the Biology Department's own graduate program as well as the interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences (BIMS) Graduate Program at the School of Medicine. This will allow him to recruit from a large and talented pool of PhD students.

As part of his appointment, Dr. Bergland is expected to contribute to the teaching mission of the Biology Department; his commitment is commensurate to that of other junior faculty members. He will not be required to teach until Spring 2017. At this time, he will teach one upper-level undergraduate course on a topic of his choice. Like other junior faculty in the department, he will also contribute to graduate education through contributing to a graduate course in evolution. Additionally, beginning in his second year, Dr. Bergland will participate in departmental service; a single committee is the norm for junior faculty. These obligations will allow his to commit over half of his effort to the research described in the attached proposal.

As Chair, I have a responsibility to ensure that junior faculty members are aware of the expectations for tenure. The tenured faculty in the Biology Department review Assistant Professors annually. Following the review, I will give Dr. Bergland feedback on his progress towards tenure as well as any suggestions that may enhance his success. I have also already appointed Dr. Douglas Taylor, a senior faculty member in evolution, to serve as mentor and guide Dr. Bergland during the initial years of his appointment. Guidance will include feedback on grant proposals, discussion of research, constructive evaluation of teaching, and general advice from hiring to how to say “no.” Additional informal mentoring is common within the department. Combined with timely research interests and creative, important ideas, I am confidant that Dr. Bergland will be a very successful faculty member!

Sincerely,

Laura F. Galloway

Professor and Chair of Biology