

Corbin D. Jones
Carolina Center for the Genome Sciences
Department of Biology
UNC - Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC
cdjones@email.unc.edu
919-843-5162

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Biocomplexity Faculty Search Committee
c/o Rob de Ruyter van Steveninck
Department of Physics
Indiana University
Swain Hall West 117
Bloomington IN 47405

Re: Jason Mezey

To Whom It May Concern:

In the nearly three years I have known Jason, I have found him to be a remarkable researcher, thinker, and colleague. As a researcher and thinker, Jason blends experiment, theory, and statistics seamlessly to test fundamental questions in Biology. For instance, how do genetic interactions among genes affect the development of complex morphological traits? Are there distinct genetic relationships among morphologically related characters? Do these genetic and morphological relationships fundamentally affect the evolution of complex traits? Answering these tough questions demands the ability to understand both single genes and whole genomes, to think at both the genetic and phenotypic levels, and to design elegant experiments and statistics. Jason - through discipline and hard work - has learned to do all of these things well and is steadily improving in his ability to synthesize and present his work.

Jason is a terrific colleague. From the day I met him, Jason has been a great sounding board for ideas and his statistical insights were often very helpful. Over the past several months, we have actively collaborated on a project looking at how transcriptional variation evolves across species. The sequencing of several *Drosophila* genomes, the extensive literature on *Drosophila*, and the availability of microarray technology has enabled us to simultaneously analyze genomic, phylogenetic, and transcriptional data. We found that there are blocks of genes where gene expression is evolving in a correlated manner across species and that the spatial organization of these blocks of genes appears distinct from that of the rest of the genome. This

project, like many of Jason's, required synthesizing data from a variety of sources and developing a statistical framework to analyze it. In addition to the long hours spent getting the project done, Jason also patiently dealt with my many emails and phone calls. Together we have already written one manuscript and have plans for at least one more.

I strongly believe that Jason Mezey is an excellent researcher, a critical thinker and a great colleague. Jason's unique background has prepared him for what I see as the next big challenge in the post-genomics era: relating the genomic data we've gathered to the phenotypes we observe. Making this critical link will require scientists with broad backgrounds and interdisciplinary thinking, which are two strengths I know Jason has.

I encourage you to contact me if you have any concerns or questions.

Cheers,

Corbin Jones