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Jeremy Bennett, Faculty Search Coordinator
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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of Dr. Barry Williams' application for an Assistant Professor position at Indiana University. I, and members of my laboratory, have been collaborating with Barry for the past year in an analysis of the evolution of the Hsp70 multigene family in yeasts. I am a molecular biologist/biochemist/geneticist. For many years, my lab has been trying to understand the functional differences amongst the 14 different Hsp70 molecular chaperones of the yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, struggling with the number and evolutionary complexities of this large multigene family. Fortunately, we met Barry about a year ago, and we have been collaborating ever since. Barry will soon write a manuscript on this work, which has both revealed intriguing aspects of evolution of Hsp70s, but also clarified a number of issues that have confused us for years.

I have been very impressed with Barry. First, he has the unusual ability to communicate outside his discipline. He is not only articulate, but is able to express himself in a way that makes it possible for those outside his field to understand. He also comes across in a way that encourages people to ask questions and admit that they do not understand. This strength of Barry's was evident when he gave a talk to my lab group. A number of graduate students, who are usually quite quiet in such situations, peppered him with questions. I think he will excel as a teacher of both undergraduate and graduate students.

Secondly, I have been impressed with the amount of effort he has expended and the care he has given to the development of new tools that will allow him to efficiently ask the biological questions that he wants to ask in the future. Although the time and energy to set up the two-step gene disruption system he describes in his research plans was great, the pay-off was well worth the effort. In fact, I think that the tools Barry developed will be used quite broadly by members of the yeast community, because they allow very efficient construction of isogenic yeast strains.

In sum, I enthusiastically recommend Dr. Barry Williams and hope that you will seriously consider his application. I think in his new position he will hit the ground running, and will be a rigorous independent scientist who will make important contributions in the future.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth A. Craig
Steenbock Professor of Microbiological Sciences and
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