

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Approved by the  
Regents  
May 15, 2014

Thore J. Bergman, assistant professor of psychology and assistant professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of psychology, with tenure, and associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

|       |      |                         |
|-------|------|-------------------------|
| Ph.D. | 2000 | Washington University   |
| B.S.  | 1993 | University of Wisconsin |

Professional Record:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 2006 – present | Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Michigan |
| 2005 – present | Co-director, University of Michigan Gelada Research Project, Simien Mountains National Park, Ethiopia                    |
| 2001 – 2005    | NRSA Post-doctoral Fellow, Moremi Game Reserve, Botswana and the University of Pennsylvania                              |

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Bergman fills an important niche within the department by providing one of the few courses that examine animal and human behavior within a comparative, evolutionary perspective. He also teaches a large undergraduate course on animal behavior (enrollment of 200-300) that fulfills a requirement within the department. Student evaluations of the large undergraduate course are good; evaluations of his seminar are quite strong. He has involved many students in his research and they praise his excellent mentorship.

Research – Professor Bergman examines social relationships, cognition, and communication in primates, with a special focus on gelada monkeys. His research has revealed new and important findings of how complex social cognitions and communications have evolved as a result of complex social relationships. He has successfully established a field site for studying primates in Ethiopia, which has become an important source of data for his research as well as for his colleagues and students. He has been highly productive since coming to Michigan, publishing 27 papers in the very top journals in science broadly and in his field. His students and post-doctoral scholars have been lead- or senior-author on eight papers. He has received several major National Science Foundation grants since 2006, as well as smaller grants from the National Geographic Society and the Leaky Foundation.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Evidence for tactical concealment in a wild primate,” with A. le Roux, et al., *Nature Communications*, 4, 2013, p. 1462.

“Social knowledge and signals in primates,” with M. J. Sheehan, *American Journal of Primatology*, 2013, DOI: 10.1002/ajp.22103

“Concessions of an alpha male? Cooperative defence and shared reproduction in multi-male primate group,” with N. Snyder-Mackler and S. C. Alberts, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 279(1743), 2012, pp. 3788-3795.

“Indirect rival assessment in a social primate, *Theropithecus gelada*,” with A. le Roux, *Animal Behaviour*, 83, 2012, pp. 249-255.

Service – Professor Bergman has served on important committees in the Department of Psychology and has taken on leadership positions in the Evolution and Human Adaptation Program (EHAP). He is a prolific reviewer for almost all the journals in his field, and is now editor of *Animal Behavior*. His service has extended to the countries where he conducts his research by initiating many conservation and outreach projects.

#### External Reviewers:

##### Reviewer (A)

“...I strongly recommend Thore Bergman for promotion and tenure at Michigan. I am confident that he is on a clear upward career trajectory that will continue to blend creative directions with detailed probing, in integrating levels and concepts from both biopsychology and evolutionary biology.”

##### Reviewer (B)

“I think his cognitive research is excellent and genuinely cutting edge. I think he has a very strong (and critical) grasp of both the human and non-human literature on animal cognition and vocalizations (his *AJP* review was excellent). This allows him to capitalize on his rich and deep data to write compelling and timely papers (such as his *Current Biology* paper...).”

##### Reviewer (C)

“...I have followed Dr. Bergman’s work and been instructed by his thoughtful writing about complex social issues in the primate that he studies. I...teach about some of his research in my classes. ... I am impressed by the fact that he is so active and well funded. The importance of Dr. Bergman’s work is reflected in his rapidly growing number of citations.”

##### Reviewer (D)

“The quality of Dr. Bergman’s work is very high. ... Furthermore, Dr. Bergman’s record clearly indicates that his productivity will continue. ... His work is clearly programmatic with a ‘center of gravity,’ a set of central questions that have sufficient depth, complexity and importance to provide the foundation for many years of research. This assessment is also consistent with his excellent record of obtaining extramural support for his research from NSF.”

##### Reviewer (E)

“Bergman is a top quality researcher with a strong theoretical orientation who uses all of the latest methods in an appropriate way, asks interesting questions using fascinating study species, and writes articulately. ...[he] has made quite significant and novel contributions to several fields of animal behavior, including communication, the evolution of intelligence, and mating strategies/sexual selection. ... I consider Bergman to be the most prolific and accomplished researcher of his level (i.e. Assistant Professor) studying the role of communication and cognition in the evolution of primate social strategies.”

Reviewer (F)

"I believe that Bergman would be granted tenure at [my institution]. He has clearly established himself as an independent scientist and has set up a permanent and well-funded long-term study that will only increase in value and productivity over the years. He has published a good number of papers in high quality journals since he has been at Michigan. From his teaching statement, it is clear that he has invested a great deal of effort in creating effective classes."

Reviewer (G)

"He has an excellent and growing reputation both nationally and internationally."

Reviewer (H)

"Thore has established at Michigan a well-funded, creative, and productive research program that places him near the top of his field and has made the University of Michigan one of the most desirable places for graduate study in primate behavior, communication, and cognition. His research productivity and grant support are excellent. ...[his] papers are invariably clear, well written, and extremely well documented. The data are carefully analyzed in an appropriate manner."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Bergman is a leader in his field and has carried out innovative and high-quality research. He is a dedicated teacher and mentor. His service to the department and the profession is outstanding. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Thore J. Bergman be promoted to the rank of associate professor of psychology, with tenure, and associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



---

Susan A. Gelman

Heinz Werner Distinguished University Professor,  
Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean,  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

May 2014