

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

Christopher W. Dick, associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, with tenure, and associate curator in the Herbarium, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, with tenure, and curator in the Herbarium, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1999	Harvard University
M.A.	1997	Harvard University
B.S.	1990	Hampshire College, Amherst

Professional Record:

2015 – present	Director, Herbarium, University of Michigan
2014 – present	Director, Edwin S. George Reserve, University of Michigan
2011 – present	Associate Professor and Associate Curator, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and the Herbarium, University of Michigan
2006 – present	Research Associate, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute
2012 – 2013	Acting Director, Herbarium, University of Michigan
2012 – 2013	Associate Chair for Museum Collections, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Michigan
2005 – 2011	Assistant Professor and Assistant Curator, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and the Herbarium, University of Michigan
2002 – 2005	Tupper Post-doctoral Fellow, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute
2001 – 2002	Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute
1999 – 2001	Molecular Evolution Post-doctoral Fellow, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Dick is a committed and effective teacher of both undergraduate and graduate students. Since his last promotion, he has taught three different courses, including a first year seminar for undergraduate students, an advanced undergraduate course, and a course for graduate students using a mix of lectures, discussions, computer-based labs, in-class demonstration labs, and field trips. Professor Dick also taught an additional graduate seminar, contributed to a field course at UM, and is about to begin teaching a course at the University of São Paulo, which does not count toward his formal teaching expectation, but demonstrates his commitment to education. Professor Dick has advised seven graduate students at UM and co-advises one at the University of São Paulo. He has mentored six post-doctoral researchers and four undergraduate students, taking the undergraduate students with him to Panama to conduct field research.

Research – Professor Dick’s research is focused on the historical and ecological factors that underlie the extraordinary species richness of trees in tropical forests. Recently, his research expanded to include temperate forests in collaboration with colleagues and students. Using

approaches that range from molecular genetics to field ecology, Professor Dick is internationally regarded as one of the top authorities on phylogeography of tropical trees. He collaborates with an extensive array of scientists across different disciplines, including major contributions to the development of the emerging field of “geogenomics,” which uses molecular genetic data to gain new insights into geological history and processes. Professor Dick has an excellent record of obtaining grants to support his research and has published an impressive 25 peer-reviewed papers since his promotion to associate professor in 2011.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“The emerging field of geogenomics: constraining geological problems with genetic data,” with P. A. Baker and S. C. Fritz, *Earth Science Reviews*, 135, 2014, pp. 38-47.

“Fine-scale niche structure of tropical forests reflects a legacy of the Great American Biotic Interchange,” with B. E. Sedio, et al., *Nature Communications*, 4(23), 2013, p. 17, DOI: 10.1038/ncomms3317.

“Neogene origins and implied warmth tolerance of Amazon tree species,” with S. Lewis, et al., *Ecology and Evolution*, 3(1), 2013, pp. 162-169.

“Molecular systematic perspectives on biome origins and dynamics,” with R. T. Pennington, *New Phytologist*, 193, 2012, pp. 9–11.

Curation – Professor Dick is currently working with digitization projects since much of the Herbarium’s specimens are not online. He was awarded a National Science Foundation Collaborative Thematic Collection (TCN) Network grant in 2012 to digitize Macroalgal collections within a network. The UM Herbarium serves as a regional hub responsible for digitizing their own collections and those from Miami, Butler, Michigan, and Youngstown State Universities. As the principal investigator, Professor Dick developed a digitization team and the protocols to capture data. To date, over 77,000 Macroalgal specimens have been digitized. Professor Dick has also been active in coordinating a proposal to digitize plants and animals from the Great Lakes region.

Service – Professor Dick’s service contributions are exemplary. At the departmental level, he has served on five different committees since his last promotion. He is also serving in two important administrative positions, associate chair and director for the Herbarium collections and director of the ES George Reserve (ESGR). As the director of the ESGR, he oversaw the incorporation of an existing 23 ha forest inventory plot into the Smithsonian’s Global Earth Observatory (SIGEO) network. As the director of the Herbarium, he is overseeing National Science Foundation-sponsored plant digitization projects. Professor Dick has also served on five college committees since 2012. He is an active member of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC), and is an associate editor for the journal, *Tropical Plant Biology*, and a subject editor for *Biotropica*.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“Seldom do you find a single individual spanning such diverse areas. Chris obviously sees the big picture, and my guess is that his best work is yet to come...”

Reviewer (B)

“He is, without doubt, one of the world’s most capable, productive, and thoughtful investigators contributing to our understanding of plant phylogeography, population genetics, and genesis of biodiversity, especially in tropical systems.”

Reviewer (C)

“I would rank Chris as one of the very best plant systematists working on tropical systems. His interests are in the origin and maintenance of plant diversity in tropical systems, and he has undertaken some of the most original and perceptive work in this area.”

Reviewer (D)

“Because of Dr. Dick’s work in Central America and tropical forests in other parts of the world, he is internationally known and respected.”

Reviewer (E)

“Overall, Dr. Dick’s recent academic record is tremendously impressive in terms of scholarly publication, grantsmanship, and mentorship.”

Reviewer (F)

“He has an unusual amalgam of skills. ... As a result, he has the ability to tackle big questions of broad interests in phylogeography and historical biology, and he can address them with the authority of someone who really knows and understands his organisms based on familiarity with them in the field.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Dick is a leading scholar in the biogeography and origin of tropical diversity. He is an excellent teacher and mentor of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as an innovative curator in the University Herbarium. The Executive Committee and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Christopher W. Dick be promoted to the rank of professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, with tenure, and curator in the Herbarium, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Andrew D. Martin, Dean
Professor of Political Science and Statistics
College of Literature, Science, and the Art

May 2016