



August 10, 2010

RE: John Boyer

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kirsten de Beurs. I earned a PhD in Natural Resource Sciences in December 2005 from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and after a postdoctoral position at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, I became an assistant professor at Virginia Tech in August 2007. I am currently moving to the same position at The University of Oklahoma in August 2010. My research involves the analysis of time series of satellite images to determine land cover and land use change. Geographically I mainly focus on the changes that have occurred in Eurasia and Africa. I have written more than 25 research articles on the analysis of satellite data, I am teaching several classes on Remote Sensing and have secured almost \$800k in research funding. I am currently the major advisor or co-advisor for six graduate students.

I met John Boyer when I arrived at the Virginia Tech in September 2007. John and I were in the same department and have shared many conversations about research and teaching over the past three years. I have read some of John's research ideas and have frequently asked his advice with respect to departmental politics, teaching, dealing with my graduate students and research. Starting as a young assistant professor at Virginia Tech John quickly turned out to be a beacon of energy and encouragement which was naturally attractive. Over the past three years, I have learned an enormous amount from John both as a person and as a faculty member.

John is a teacher, inside and out. He stands for energy, action, and innovation but also well-roundedness. He will challenge students and fellow faculty members to think and to learn. It is hard to describe him as a simple instructor and to capture his achievements in numbers. However, I will attempt to emphasize some of his major achievements. I could draw from a wide range of achievements to highlight John as a powerful educator, but perhaps the fact that he received the Student Alumni Associates (SAA) Student's Choice Award for Faculty Member of the Year for six years in a row (2004 – 2009) is enough. His well roundedness and energy are easily felt by investigating his CV. He not only uses new technologies to educate students, he also writes his own books (for both his major classes), and organizes film nights and special events for students and the wider community. John constantly works on innovation and regularly receives grants

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to further develop his classes. As a result he is one of the most innovative teachers I have ever known. While he shines as an educator, John also has plenty of research ideas for which he regularly receives grants. In fact, over the past eight years, he has received over \$80k in grants, which is more than many faculty members in geography departments across the country.

John is an extremely accomplished teacher who is making a significant contribution to the lives of thousands of students every day. I was lucky to meet John when I was just a starting faculty member and it would have been very difficult to stay and be successful without his encouragement. I have recently decided to leave Virginia Tech but I would be more than happy to give additional information about John. You can reach me at [kdebeurs@ou.edu](mailto:kdebeurs@ou.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. M. de Beurs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a stylized "de Beurs" following.

Dr. Kirsten M. de Beurs  
Assistant Professor