



# INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Office of the Dean

October 25, 2011

William Blomquist, PhD  
Dean, School of Liberal Arts  
IUPUI

Dear Dean Blomquist:

This is a letter of strong support for the proposed PhD program in Health Communication. Flawed communication has been documented as a significant contributor to failures in health care leading to medical error. Despite numerous attempts to improve the quality and reliability of communication between providers and patients, and provider to provider, communication breakdowns continue to be a problem. There is much opportunity to generate new knowledge for addressing issues surrounding health communication that could make a significant impact on health care and healthcare outcomes. Several of our PhD students over the past few years have focused their dissertation to examine and test models with concepts related to, or even directly associated with, communication in health care settings.

PhD students in Nursing must have an approved minor specified in their program. Many have chosen to take these minor courses in the area of communication to support their dissertation research focus. Most have had to travel to Purdue University to take these courses. Although these courses are excellent, they also then restrict the number of hours the student can transfer in from their previous master's degree program thereby lengthening their PhD program. In addition, given the graduate school's requirement that a faculty member from the approved minor program should sit on the dissertation committee, this would also be an excellent medium to foster interprofessional education and collaboration across disciplines if the School of Liberal Arts offered such a degree. Having such an option here at IUPUI would clearly benefit our PhD students and the work of the faculty.

Sincerely,

Marion E. Broome, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Dean and Distinguished Professor  
Indiana University School of Nursing

October 13, 2011

Kristina Horn Sheeler, PhD  
Associate Professor and Department Chair  
Department of Communication Studies  
IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI  
Cavanaugh Hall, 425 University Blvd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

It is without reservation and with the upmost enthusiasm that I write to you to support the approval of the PhD degree in Health Communication in the Department of Communication Studies at IUPUI. I have read through the proposal and I have found it to be a very compelling and strong case for the program to be implemented at IUPUI. Having had served on this committee from the outset, I can attest to the very hard work that you and your colleagues in the Department of Communication Studies invested in the development of the proposal. I believe the resources invested in the development and implementation of the program will be utilized appropriately to ensure a high level of quality instruction for students. Also, I do not perceived that the resources invested in this PhD program will not detract from the necessary programs in the School of Liberal Arts.

I believe that IUPUI is uniquely positioned to offer a PhD degree in Health Communication. I believe the faculty in the Department of Communication Studies has the necessary expertise to train the next generation of Health Communication researchers. From a research perspective, IUPUI in general and the School of Liberal Arts, in particular, should embrace a PhD program in Health Communication. It is congruent with the strategic plan of the campus in terms of developing innovative PhD programs and dovetails nicely with the health and life science initiative of IUPUI. In many of my current research projects, I work with doctorally prepared Health Communication scholars. The skills and perspectives that such individuals bring to a research team are novel and important to cultivate a successful research program. I believe that the curriculum of this PhD program is very sound and innovatively builds upon the strengths of faculty both within the School of Liberal Arts and with other Centers and Schools on this campus. I look forward to seeing this important program implemented to better serve the students of IUPUI for years to come.

Sincerely,



Neale R. Chumbler, PhD  
Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology  
Director, Institute for Research on Social Issues  
Interim Director, Survey Research Center

October 18, 2011

Kristina Sheeler, Ph.D  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Communication Studies  
IU School of Liberal Arts  
IUPUI  
425 University Blvd.  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

Dear Professor Sheeler:

I write in support of the proposal to establish a Health Communication Ph.D. at IUPUI. Like the successful proposal from the Department of Economics three years ago, this proposal targets a growing need in society at large as well as in Indianapolis in particular.

The need for Health Communication specialists is detailed in the proposal and it appears that the Department of Communication Studies is ideally placed at IUPUI to take advantage of the interface with the health campus of Indiana University, including the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, and Health and Rehabilitation Services. In addition they are at the nexus of an array of humanities and social science programs in the health area including Medical Humanities, Medical Sociology, Health Economics and the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication. Hence their students will be imbedded in a rich educational environment.

The proposed program wisely includes a mechanism for benefitting from the expertise of a number of senior scholars from outside the Department of Communication Studies itself. This helps to ensure that the PhD students will have the benefit of this broad array of expertise. The proposal lists more than twenty Senior Faculty Affiliates who have committed to provide their expertise to the program.

The proposal appears to be carefully thought out and innovative. We welcome this proposal to establish another doctoral program in the School of Liberal Arts which aligns with the Life Sciences mission of the campus.

Sincerely



Paul S. Carlin  
Professor and Chair

Diane M. Billings

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10843 East County Road 750 North  
Brownsburg, IN 46112  
317.852.7124  
[dbillin@iupui.edu](mailto:dbillin@iupui.edu)

February 14, 2011

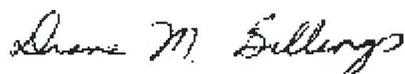
Sandra Petronio, PhD  
Professor, Department of Communication Studies  
IU School of Medicine

Dear Dr. Petronio,

I am writing to indicate my support for the proposed PhD in Health Communications program at IUPUI. National panels, advisory groups, and commissions continue to identify ineffective communications among health care providers as the underlying cause of errors in clinical agencies and misunderstanding of treatment plans on the part of patients. Having health care professionals who are prepared to address these issues will contribute to improved care quality and patient safety. With its expertise and faculty resources in this area, IUPUI is the perfect location for this program.

Thank you for inviting me to become an Affiliate Faculty member. I would be able to participate in a pro seminar or serve on dissertation committees.

Sincerely,



Diane M. Billings, Ed.D, RN, FAAN  
Chancellor's Professor Emeritus  
Indiana University School of Nursing  
Indianapolis, Indiana



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

School of Medicine

February 28, 2011

Sandra Petronio, Ph.D., Professor  
Department of Communication Studies  
Indiana University School of Medicine  
Campus of IUPUI  
Senior Affiliate Faculty  
Charles Warren Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics  
Director: IUPUI Translating Research into Practice Initiative (TRIP)  
Indianapolis, IN 46228

Dear Sandra:

I am excited by your plan to propose a new Ph.D. program in Health Communication and I would like to be a part of it by serving as a resource for the Ph.D. students who matriculate in this program. Given the explosion of sources for medical information, many people have access to information that is both accurate and inaccurate and hence health communication has become more important than ever before. I would enjoy giving students experience with, and examples of, the importance of health communication as well as research experience in my laboratories.

I applaud your idea to establish a new degree program that will build on the many strengths of the School of Medicine and will enhance the programs currently in place.

Best regards,

Janice C. Froehlich, Ph.D.  
Chancellor's Professor  
Professor of Medicine, Cellular and  
Integrative Physiology, and Medical Neurobiology  
Indiana University School of Medicine  
Scientific Co-Director of the Indiana Alcohol Research Center



## Indiana University Health

March 14, 2010

Sandra Petronio, PhD  
5801 Sunset Lane  
Indianapolis, IN 46228

Dear Dr. Petronio:

I am delighted to accept your offer to become a part of the emerging PhD Program in Health Communication. I am able to offer both myself personally as well as the full resources of the Charles Warren Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics at Indiana University Health, which I hope will provide unique and valuable environments for learning, research, and investigation as part of this program. Please know that you have my unequivocal support and I look forward to serving with you.

Yours sincerely,

Paul R. Helft, MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Division of Hematology/Oncology  
Indiana University School of Medicine  
Director, Charles Warren Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics  
Indiana University Health

**Charles Warren Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics**

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**[luhealth.org](http://luhealth.org)**



## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

School of Medicine

February 7, 2011

Sandra Petronio, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Department of Communication Studies  
IU School of Medicine  
Campus of IUPUI  
Senior Affiliate Faculty  
Charles Warren Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics  
IU Health  
*Director: IUPUI Translating Research into Practice Initiative (TRIP)*  
Contact: 5801 Sunset Lane  
Indianapolis, IN 46228

Dear Dr. Petronio,

I write this letter in support of the concept of creating a Ph.D. in Health Communication to be offered by the communication department. I believe that this is an important development for the university and it is an opportune time to make that happen. We have many resources on the campus related to health issues and the increasing number of jobs, both academic and otherwise, in health communication, the campus and department of communication is positioned to develop offering this advanced degree.

Medicine and healthcare is truly at its base is founded upon communication—between providers, patients, staff and the community. It is an area that needs scholarly work as we strive to improve our best practices to provide better, more effective and humanistic care. In addition, medicine is best practiced within a team and the creation of this program models the behavior that we wish to see. That is, if we work together, then we should learn together, which is why I am excited that there are people in many disciplines that can and will be engaged in this program. We in clinical medicine look to our colleagues who study communication as a discipline to help us navigate this ever more complex discipline.

I look forward to the initiation of this exciting new program to be offered here at IUPUI.

Jeffrey M. Rothenberg, MD, MS  
President of the Faculty of the Indiana University  
Associate Professor of Clinical Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Vice Chair for Faculty Development and Alumni Affairs  
Vice President of the Medical Staff of: Indiana University Health  
Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology  
550 N. University Blvd. Rm. 2440  
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**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY MEDICINE**

School of Medicine

March 14, 2011

Sandra G. Petronio, PhD  
Professor, Department of Communication Studies  
IUPUI Office of Administration  
355 Lansing Street, AO-104  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2815

RE: Health Communication Program

Dear Dr. Petronio:

I am writing to express my interest and willingness to participate as an affiliate faculty member for the Ph.D. in Health Communication Program.

This program will certainly enhance the opportunities at the IUPUI Campus in a most needed area and will help to reduce gaps in health care.

I would be honored to participate in such a worthy endeavor.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly @ 278-8710 or at [jsevilla@iupui.edu](mailto:jsevilla@iupui.edu).

Sincerely,

Javier F. Sevilla-Mártir, MD  
Assistant Dean for Diversity,  
Associate Professor of Clinical Family Medicine,  
Director Hispanic/Latino Health and  
International Medicine and Global Health

JFSM/beh