



## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

College of Arts and Sciences  
Bloomington

2 October 2011

I am writing to strongly support the proposed Ph.D. program in Health Communication on the campus of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), which would be administered by the Department of Communication Studies in the School of Liberal Arts.

The proposal sets out a thoughtful and compelling case for this new doctoral program—a program that is certain to attract students, as well as serve existing student needs across the IUPUI campus. The program's plans to combine scholarly and clinical training in health/medical communication is particularly noteworthy and exciting, as students would be working with both academic and medical/health care workers. For this reason alone, having this program at the IUPUI campus makes sense, as IUPUI and Indianapolis offer a wealth of resources for a program like this in the form of related IUPUI programs (Nursing, Dentistry, Social Work, Health and Rehabilitation Science, the School of Public Health, Medical Humanities, Bioethics), the Indiana University School of Medicine, and community-based health care programs and initiatives. Indeed, I am surprised that a program like this hasn't been proposed before this.

The Department of Communication Studies at IUPUI has a strong record in health and medical communication anchored by the work of such faculty members as Linda G. Bell, Jennifer Bute, John Parrish-Sprowl, Sandra Petronio, and Nancy Rhodes. These faculty, along with two new hires with health communication backgrounds, and those faculty who work in related areas such as institutional communication, provide an excellent core around which to build this Ph.D. program in Health Communication.

The faculty of the Department of Communication and Culture (CMCL) at IU-Bloomington have had an opportunity to look at this program proposal. They found that it doesn't duplicate our program here, was solidly and soundly conceived, and, therefore, it was a program that they could support. As chair of the CMCL Department, I also offer my support for this new Ph.D. program.

Alexander Doty, chair, Department of Communication and Culture  
and Professor in the Department of Gender Studies

October 18, 2011

Kristina Horn Sheeler, PhD  
Associate Professor and Department Chair  
Department of Communication Studies IUPUI  
Indianapolis, IN

Dr. Sheeler:

Thank you for your request for input into your proposal for a new PhD program in “Health Communication” to be offered by your program in the College of Liberal Arts at IUPUI.

I have circulated the executive summary provided by Dr. Sandra Petronio and have received some feedback from the roughly dozen health communication faculty members at Purdue that hold appointments in the Brian Lamb School of Communication. I am pleased to report that for the most part the response was supportive of your effort.

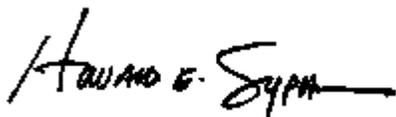
There seems to be general agreement among my colleagues that the area of health communication remains a strong market for new PhDs. This market is competitive in terms of academic positions and is at this point not “over sold”. There also appears to be a good market for PhDs in this area who have an interest in postdoctoral training at strong research centers and universities. Finally, there is also the perception that a focused program with a base in a world-class medical school (like the medical school at IU) would have the resources to provide an excellent education for students.

My colleagues are excited about “what might be” in the sense that given the strong ties between IUPUI and Purdue at West Lafayette there might be opportunities for combining classes (via video conferencing), collaborative research at multiple levels and practicum internship collaboration between programs. Joint appointments might also be a possibility.

It is our understanding that new resources and additional research and instructional staff in the “health communication” research area will be acquired or made available as part of this effort. Additional faculty resources, new research seed funds and funds for graduate student support will enable a strong base to become a viable national resource (which we think is possible for many reasons).

My colleagues and our program are willing and interested in exploring possible synergies and would look forward to discussions of collaborative opportunities across a range of instructional and research areas as this effort proceeds. Please do not hesitate to contact me should any of our suggestions seem interesting.

Regards,



Howard E. Sypher  
Professor and Head

**DISTINGUISH** *yourself*



## SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

October 27, 2011

Dr. Kristina Horn Sheeler  
Associate Professor and Department Chair  
Department of Communication Studies, IUPUI

Dear Dr. Sheeler:

I appreciate the opportunity to review the proposed PhD in Health Communication by the Department of Communication Studies. I applaud the excellent work to build the proposal and to examine the current and future demand and the appropriate curriculum for such a degree.

I support the proposal on behalf of the School of Journalism.

We had heard about the proposal on a number of occasions, and I was pleased that you and I, along with our executive associate dean at IUPUI, Dan Drew, were able to discuss the goals and ideas listed in the proposal. In addition, I met with several IU Bloomington faculty members who have research and teaching interests that include work in similar areas.

IUPUI has the potential to lead the nation in many areas of life sciences if we take advantage of these kinds of degrees and links among the many excellent programs here and throughout Indianapolis. Matching a degree with the strengths of the university and the city is ideal, and we have tried to do so with master's programs in sports journalism and public relations and health.

I envision the opportunity for faculty from our programs to work together and with the health and medical sciences programs to build the kind of national and international strength, both academic and professional, across many diverse areas. It will take a combined effort to address the many important state, national and global issues.

Your faculty members have the credentials to develop an excellent PhD program in this field. The interdisciplinary minor will allow students to take courses across the campus, too. As the proposal notes, the ability to work with health-related schools and programs at IUPUI and in the community is a significant advantage.

I look forward to the success of your doctoral program and to potential research, teaching, service and programmatic partnerships that may develop between our programs.

Sincerely,

Bradley J. Hamm  
Dean