SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean
IUPUI

January 13, 2011

Charles R. Bantz, Chancellor and Executive Vice President
AO 104
IUPUI

Dear Chancellor Bantz,

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Ulla Connor, Professor of English and the Barbara E. and Karl R. Zimmer Chair in Intercultural Communication, for a Chancellor's Professorship. As a faculty member in the Department of English at IUPUI since 1984, Professor Connor has focused her work on developing and applying linguistic frameworks to solve problems of intercultural communication in the classroom, in philanthropy, the workplace, and most recently, in healthcare. She has made significant and important contributions to the campus in research, teaching, civic engagement, and professional service.

Research

In more than 100 published articles and book chapters, most in refereed publications, and in 10 authored and edited books, Professor Connor has helped define a relatively new field of study in second-language acquisition called contrastive, or intercultural, rhetoric. She is recognized as the leading scholar in this sub-field of applied linguistics, which addresses how written texts are produced and consumed across languages and cultures. Her groundbreaking book *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 1996) was a watershed in how contrastive rhetoric is conducted, as it moved the field toward a more rigorous empirical analysis of cross-cultural data. This widely acclaimed book continues to be the standard reference volume in the field.

As noted in her support letters, Professor Connor is not one to rest on her laurels, but has kept this field up-to-date and moving forward. Her most recent book, *Intercultural Rhetoric in Second Language Writing*, will be published this year by University of Michigan Press. Her stature and leadership are also reflected by the fact that Professor Connor organized the first two international conferences of the relatively new field of "intercultural rhetoric" at IUPUI; Ohio State University hosted the third conference in 2007, and this growing

conference has already been scheduled to be held at the University of Michigan in 2009, and at Georgia State University in 2010.
Professor Connor is also the lead editor of *Contrastive Rhetoric: Reaching to Intercultural Rhetoric* (Benjamins, 2008), which includes both theoretical and empirical explorations of the new perspectives she has proposed. In 2004 she was the guest editor of a special issue on contrastive rhetoric for the prestigious *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, in which she called for new perspectives in intercultural rhetoric that are better aligned with the latest thinking in applied linguistics and the evolving practices of teaching English as a second language. Based on her demand as a keynote speaker, and the reception she receives at international conferences, there is no doubt that her new ideas on intercultural rhetoric will once again prove to be groundbreaking. Reflective of her status in the field, an Advanced Google Scholar search shows 1,290 citations of her work, notably greater than the numbers of citations to other leading scholars in applied linguistics.

In addition to being the leading scholar on intercultural rhetoric, Professor Connor's work has had a notable impact on other areas of scholarship in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. One of the areas in which she and her colleagues have been described as having altered the field and "broken new ground" is corpus linguistics. The application of corpus linguistics to language learning is a relatively new area in linguistics, using computerized, systematic, data driven study of language analysis. In addition to two edited volumes and a number of articles published in top-rated international journals, a book, co-authored with one of the "giants" of corpus linguistics, Douglas Biber, and titled *Discourse on the Move: Using Corpus Analysis to Describe Discourse Structure*, was published in 2007 (John Benjamins).

Because of her unquestioned status and well-established reputation for an active and high-quality research agenda, Professor Connor was awarded, in 2003, the Barbara E. and Karl R. Zimmer Chair in Intercultural Communication, the first endowed chair in the IU School of Liberal Arts. In 2000, she was awarded the highest honor given to a scholar in Finland, her native country, when she was elected a "Foreign Member" of the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters (Finland's Senior Academy of Sciences), a distinction held only by 70 scholars. In May of 2007, Professor Connor received the highest honor of the IU School of Liberal Arts, the Outstanding Distinguished Resident Faculty Award. Here too, the support letters accompanying my nomination echo this view and offer strong praise for Professor Connor's work and reputation in their letters of support for this nomination.

An essential element of Professor Connor's research has been her leadership of the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication. ICIC began in 1998 as a research and service center in the Department of English, approved by the IU Board of Trustees. Professor Connor is the visionary and driving force behind the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication. The ICIC, which she founded and directs, has a three-fold mission: to conduct linguistic research and disseminate linguistic knowledge concerning intercultural communication; to foster interdisciplinary research and collaboration among IU faculty; and to provide innovative workshops and proprietary training materials. An external review of the Center in 2005 called ICIC "not just a jewel in the crown of the Department of English, but also one in the university as a whole" (p. 7). This distinction was recognized in 2010 when ICIC was one of ten research centers at IUPUI to be approved for funding under the Signature Centers Initiative.

A major new emphasis of the ICIC, under Professor Connor's leadership, is research on health discourse, a subfield of applied linguistics that seeks to provide linguistic solutions to problems arising in the processing, comprehension, and interpretation of health-related communication such as doctor-patient interactions, patient education programs and pharmaceutical literature. Through its Program of Intercultural Research on Health Discourse, ICIC provides a coherent infrastructure for an interdisciplinary group of researchers to pursue cutting-edge research on quantitative and qualitative analyses of patients' life stories and literacy practices. In April 2007, Professor Connor and ICIC received a $480,000 grant from the Lilly Foundation to support research on health literacy and medication adherence among type II diabetes patients. The award reflects the ability of Professor Connor to secure funding in health communication and continues ICIC's successful record of revenue generation ($2,942,985 since 1998) in the discipline of applied linguistics, which is not known for a high availability of grants.

Teaching

Professor Connor's teaching appointment has been divided between graduate and undergraduate courses in linguistics, English composition, and English as a second language (ESL). She has developed and taught at least ten new courses for the ESL Program, the English Master's Program, and for the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Certificate. She was instrumental in the development of graduate courses for practicing K-12 ESL teachers, resulting in the state of Indiana's first ESL teacher endorsement program with the School of Education in the late 1980s.

Her teaching evaluations are consistently high; students comment on her knowledge of the subject and enthusiasm for the topics. She has been particularly focused on teaching and mentoring graduate students and has directed 14 MA theses, two of which have received awards. Throughout the years, she has published and co-presented at conferences with the vast majority of her thesis advisees.

Professor Connor has been invited to teach linguistics and applied linguistics around the world. For four summers, she was honored by invitations to teach in the international TESOL Summer Institutes in Slovakia, Venezuela, and two locations in the U.S. The TESOL Board selects only 4 to 6 teachers among its 27,000 members to teach at these institutes. She has been invited to teach in the Distinguished Weekend Seminar in the Temple University's Graduate Program in Japan. Twice, she was the Visiting Distinguished Donner Professor at Åbo Akademi University in Finland; for two months, she was Guest Professor in the Department of English at Lund University in Sweden; and for five years she taught a summer course in the Ph.D. Program in Linguistics at Universidad De Leon, Spain.

She has served and continues to serve as external examiner or member of dissertation committees at universities around the world. In the past ten years, she has been an external examiner for five Ph.D. dissertations in Denmark, Finland, and Malaysia, has served on three Ph.D. dissertation committees at Purdue University, and has been appointed to be an opponent at two public dissertation defenses, one in Finland, the other in Denmark. This is fairly remarkable in that she teaches in a department that has no Ph.D. program, and reflects both the international recognition that she has achieved and her commitment to the development of new scholars.

In addition to teaching linguistics for undergraduate and graduate English, ESL and linguistics majors at IUPUI and at universities overseas, Professor Connor has had an impact on courses she has developed for international medical students and postdoctoral research fellows for the IU School of Medicine. Since 2004, she has worked with the Departments of IU Family Practice and IU Internal Medicine to provide intercultural communication testing and training for international medical graduates. The collaboration has resulted in tutorial instruction, a regularly offered pronunciation course, and workshops for incoming new residents, international and native speakers alike. The teaching and testing have been documented in numerous publications and presentations, and a resulting intercultural communication test is being piloted at other U.S. universities based on this collaboration with the IU School of Medicine.

Also for the IU School of Medicine, Professor Connor used the findings of a needs analysis (Connor & Mbaye, 2004), commissioned by the campus vice-president of research at IUPUI, to design a special course that addresses the language and socialization needs of international postdoctoral researchers. Other U.S. universities, including the University of Alabama and the University of Tennessee, have adopted the course model, and presentations have been given at international conferences, most recently in Japan (Rozycki & Connor, 2008).

Service

At IUPUI, Professor Ulla Connor has been instrumental in starting three new programs: the English as a Second Language Program (founded in 1985), the Master's Degree Program in the Department of English (founded in 1990), and the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication (founded in 1998). The English as a Second Language Program, which she was asked to set up in her second year as an untenured assistant professor, has grown into a coherent unit based on sound principles of language teaching. It now enrolls around 1000 international students a year.

During the period from 1990 to 1994, Professor Connor served as chair of the Graduate Committee during which time the Master's Degree program was approved by all the required committees at IUPUI, from the department to the Board of Trustees. Thanks to her experiences as Assistant Dean of the Graduate School of Purdue University in 1988-1990, she was able to shepherd the proposal through the myriad of steps.

In addition to its academic mission, the ICIC has a strong commitment to teaching and service through community outreach. It has been recognized as a provider of high quality customized ESL instruction in the workplace and especially as a provider of effective teacher training for the workplace. With a strong advisory board consisting of prominent civic leaders in the community, ICIC furthers the IUPUI Mission as an urban university with a strong commitment to providing relevant educational skills for fast-internationalizing Indiana.

Because of Professor Connor's international studies in the research and teaching of applied linguistics, the ICIC has attracted an impressive cadre of visiting scholars and research associates from around the world, including such internationally-known scholars as Professors Nils Erik Enkrist, Åbo Akademi University**,** Finland; Srikant Sarangi, Cardiff,

Wales; Ana Moreno, University of Leon; Heidi Hamilton, Georgetown University; and Douglas Biber, Northern Arizona University.

Throughout her career at IUPUI, Professor Connor has been active in university committees at the various levels. In the Department, her committee service ranges from several search committees, promotion and tenure committee (elected committee chair) and such important ad-hoc committees as chairing the computer committee (1984, when the Department established its first computerized classrooms), and ad-hoc department restructuring committee that resulted in the constitution of the Department's Executive Committee.

At the school and campus levels, Professor Connor's leadership is obvious in elections to such respected committees as the Promotion and Tenure, the IUPUI Faculty Council Planning Committee, and the Futures' Group in 2001-2003, a high-level campus planning committee consisting of deans, vice chancellors, and faculty representatives.

Conclusion

The broad mission of IUPUI is to "advance the State of Indiana and the intellectual growth of its citizens to the highest levels nationally and internationally through research and creative activity, teaching and learning, and civic engagement" and to "promote the educational, cultural, and economic development of central Indiana and beyond through innovative collaborations, external partnerships, and a strong commitment to diversity." Professor Connor's record clearly shows her strong commitment to the campus and its mission as she has compiled a career-long record of high achievement in all three areas of faculty work that has indeed promoted the intellectual growth of our students to the highest levels, both nationally and internationally. She is deserving of being named Chancellor's Professor, and I am pleased to nominate her and recommend her to you.

Sincerely,

William Blomquist
Dean and Professor