INDIANA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF CELLULAR
& INTEGRATIVE PHYSIOLOGY
School of Medicine

January 14, 2011

Faculty Appointments and Advancement
Academic Affairs / Dean of Faculties
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis
Administration Building, Suite 126
355 North Lansing Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2896

RE: Nomination of Dr. Susan J. Gunst for Chancellor's Professorship

Dear Chancellor's Professor Selection Committee:

It is my distinct pleasure to nominate Dr. Gunst because she has been a phenomenal, stellar faculty colleague, a true "university citizen", for 22 years in the School of Medicine on the IUPUI campus. Her intrinsic drive to lead IUPUI in all academic missions of research, teaching, and service place her in the top tier of true academicians. She is an exemplary, complete faculty member whose **outstanding** national reputation and record of accomplishments and **commitment and dedication** to IUPUI make her an ***ideal Chancellor's Professor***.

Research
Dr. Gunst's individual **research** program is solid and consistent, spanning over 28 years at the faculty level. She began as an Assistant Professor at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine and IUPUI was fortunate to recruit Dr. Gunst here as an Associate Professor in our department (then named "Physiology and Biophysics") in 1989. She was promoted to Professor of Cellular & Integrative Physiology in 1996. Quantitative highlights of her achievements are: 85 peer reviewed manuscripts, 70 Invited lectures, chair of 21 symposia, over $13,000,000 in extramural research funding as a principal investigator, over $6,000,000 as a co-investigator, and almost $550,000 as a fellowship sponsor. Dr. Gunst currently is the Principal Investigator on two National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants, one of which is in it's 25th year of funding. Most impressive is that one of her NIH grants was funded in 2008 on the first submission of the competitive renewal. This highly ranked research grant and having two concurrently are very rare achievements in the austere NIH funding climate today, thus fully attesting to the pinnacle quality of research Dr. Gunst is doing.

Very important to IUPUI overall is the interdisciplinary nature of Dr. Gunst's work. She has very close collaborations with clinician-scientists in pulmonary medicine. Integrating basic science with some clinical perspective is a major challenge. This type of "translational" research is an emphasis of the NIH "Roadmap", which is a major strategic plan for biomedical research. Also, Dr. Gunst has been a major contributor to NIH Shared Instrumentation Grants, which clearly enhance the IUPUI campus research infrastructure significantly. A specific note on the research specialty of Dr. Gunst is her strong roots in classical physiology, yet the fabulously innovative, cutting edge molecular methods that she uses to dissect out intricate cellular and molecular pathways of airway function and disease. Dr. Gunst has strong roots in her discipline of physiology, but she shows a continuous reaching out to other faculty and providing an example of her high standards of excellence to the entire IUPUI campus. Finally, the ability of Dr. Gunst to integrate clinical and basic sciences was validated by her receipt of the Parker B. Francis Award Lecture of the American Thoracic Society in 2010. This is one of the highest awards in this professional society, which is composed of about equal numbers of clinicians and basic scientists.

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The strong research credentials of Dr. Gunst and her research service nationally can be attested to by her outstanding service as Associate Editor of the *Journal of Applied Physiology*. We are fortunate to have more detailed comments about Dr. Gunst's strengths by Drs. Sieck and Dempsey, who have been Editors-In-Chief of the *Journal of Applied Physiology*. Her service as Editor of the American Physiological Society Handbook of Physiology in 2010-2011 is another crowning achievement. The Handbook is the arguably the most authoritative review in the world on special topics in physiology and these chapters are some of the most widely cited in the field for many years. Clearly, Dr. Gunst will have a lasting impact on the field of smooth muscle contractility.

Teaching

Dr. Gunst is a devoted, supportive, and rigorous teacher and mentor. If anything is understated in her vitae, it might be her excellent contribution to our teaching mission. Dr. Gunst has contributed to every facet of formal classroom teaching and student mentoring in our department and the School of Medicine from beginning graduate level courses, medical student lectures, facilitator for problem-based learning sessions, and lectures to clinical fellows. Of particular note is her development of a new course F711 "Integrative Physiology: Cells to Systems", which was an excellent transition for our curriculum to the Indiana Biomedical Gateway (IBMG) curriculum in the School of Medicine. Despite her substantial, 80% commitment to extramural research grants and her service activities, she took on this major effort. Dr. Gunst continues to be a major contributor to the role of our Cellular & Integrative Physiology Ph.D. program curriculum within the IBMG curriculum. These curriculum changes are never trivial and Dr. Gunst has provided key insights regarding well grounded principles of integrative physiology within the current trend toward reductionism in the biomedical sciences.

The enormous influence of Dr. Gunst as an outstanding role model for graduate students must be appreciated. She has served on 12 Ph.D. committees, supervised 11 M.S. and Ph.D. students, supervised 24 research interns, and supervised 18 postdoctoral fellows. Almost 50% of the students and postdoctoral fellows whom Dr. Gunst supervises have received independent fellowship funding from the American Heart Association, American Lung Association, and National Institutes of Health, which testify to the quality of the fellows and the mentoring of Dr. Gunst. She is a highly valued mentor, as evident from her participation as mentor on 7 different training grants.

I have the pleasure to serve on several Ph.D. student committees with Dr. Gunst. I am impressed by her superb balance of a calming influence and rigorous science. In particular, she works almost miraculously with students having English as a second language to shape their seminar presentations and theses into very lucid works. Again, this shows the national and international impact that Dr. Gunst makes on education.

Campus service

Dr. Gunst has served on 17 School of Medicine and IUPUI campus committees and 13 Cellular & Integrative Physiology department committees. Dr. Gunst has contributed consistently to university-wide committees over the majority of her career. Most impressive is that her commitments are increasing as her career is more established and she reaches a more senior level. Dr. Gunst has served on several important search committees for Chair positions. She takes her promotion and tenure committee duties very seriously, as these decisions are essential for the livelihood of faculty at IUPUI. One of the most challenging and demanding of time and effort is the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). We are very fortunate to have her insightful contributions to the IACUC, which can substantially facilitate research progress. Most recently in

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2010 and 2011, Dr. Gunst was a member of the search committee for the Dean of the IU Dental School, which is an enormous commitment and will have lasting impact on IUPUI.

National service

The national service to the profession that Dr. Gunst provides is absolutely staggering in excellence, breadth, and depth. She has distinguished recognition as an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Applied Physiology*, national leadership in the American Physiological Society (APS), American Thoracic Society, and NIH Study Section. Some of her earliest leadership was as Chair of the APS Careers in Physiology Committee when she was only in early- to mid-career as an Associate Professor. My opinion is that Dr. Gunst lead the Careers in Physiology Committee when it was in its early formative stages and established an excellent base. I think, partly thanks to Dr. Gunst, that Committee is probably one of the leading resources for mentoring of students and faculty. Most recently, Dr. Gunst was Chair of the APS Respiration Section, which capped off her service on the Respiration Section Steering Committee that determines overall research directions in respiratory physiology in the APS. Dr. Gunst takes on similarly impressive leadership roles in the American Thoracic Society (ATS), which interfaces basic science and clinical medicine.

Dr. Gunst has been on the Editorial Board of 8 journals and has been a reviewer of manuscripts from 20 journals during her career. The research service of Dr. Gunst is most evident by the extensive peer review of grant proposals for the NIH for the past 18 years, having served on 25 grant review panels. She was a regular member of an NIH Study Section from 1997-2001. Usually faculty take a long hiatus from the extreme demands from such review activities and they decline any requests for years after serving. Dr. Gunst's dedication to the field was shown by her volunteering to continue with annual reviews of Program Project Grants, temporary Study Section duty, and another stint of regular Study Section duties 2006-2010. This NIH grant review service is truly outstanding in the quality, importance, and enormous amount of work involved. The sacrifice in regular membership on NIH Study Section cannot be overstated, as this requires at least 6-8 weeks of intensive grant reviews annually. I am truly in awe of her dedication and I am thankful that Dr. Gunst represents IUPUI fantastically by her extensive national service to the profession.

Intangibles that are tangible

Enthusiasm and collegiality are deeply rooted in Susan Gunst. I know when Susan is in the hall outside the departmental office because there are always warm greetings from Susan to other faculty and staff. Her delightfully upbeat manner elicits an almost uniformly nice reply from others. These pleasant exchanges really feed on each other and amplify feelings of optimism. In fact, I do not even notice a level of stress when Dr. Gunst has imminent grant deadlines. Her enthusiasm and uplifting manner are delightfully infectious. Susan clearly is a dedicated faculty member and promotes a collegial atmosphere in the department. Susan is a loyal champion for all the faculty in our department and seeks fairness at every turn. Susan is assertive in matters of concern to the department, as she will visit me in my office and make her views known. Even when she quietly utters the words "Can I shut the door?", which can seem to be a red flag for trouble to some, I always know that she will present her views and we will both be enlightened from our discussion.

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Summary

One of the strongest testimonies that I will make is that Dr. Gunst will definitely maintain her outstanding level of performance if she is awarded the Chancellor's Professorship. Dr. Gunst is so wonderfully, intrinsically motivated to learn, to achieve, to serve, and to educate. Quite frankly, if everyone in my department was like Susan, the department could virtually run itself because all the faculty would be true academicians dedicated to excellence by their internal drive. I predict that the Chancellor will highly value consulting with Dr. Gunst regarding further enhancement of the university because of the insights that Dr. Gunst can offer regarding mentorship of faculty, education, research, and service. I urge you to reward Dr. Gunst appropriately with a Chancellor's Professorship. ***Dr. Gunst is the ideal Chancellor's Professor***.

Thank you very much for your time and effort dedicated to this important decision.

Sincerely,

Michael Sturek, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Department of Cellular & Integrative Physiology
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Gunst Chancellor's Prof 2011 nomin--Sturek v1.doc

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