IUPUI
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
INDIANA UNIVERSITY–PURDUE UNIVERSITY
Indianapolis

January 18, 2011

Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching Review Committee
Faculty Appointments and Advancement
Office of Academic Affairs
Administrative Building, Room 126
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

RE: Nomination of Robert G. Bringle

I am writing in support of the nomination of Robert Bringle for the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. I have worked closely with Dr. Bringle since he joined the IUPUI faculty in Psychology in 1974. He is one of the "founders" of IUPUI as we know it today, and his leadership has helped ensure the incredible improvements in student academic achievement and persistence that we have experienced. Many IUPUI faculty, have made it their life's work to be "institution builders" Dr. Bringle is at the forefront of that group.

Dr. Bringle's work has always centered on teaching. He has been a pioneer in linking instruction to research and to community engagement and public service. He has taught the social psychology capstone laboratory for his entire career, and the list of publications and presentations from his students (some of them now faculty) is a tribute to his careful attention to each student. In the mid-1970s he developed a new master's program on Applied Social Psychology that existed for twenty years. Dr. Bringle has also been a leader for undergraduate research. For four years, he coordinated the Psychology Department's participation in programs from the National Science Foundation for funding undergraduate research. His ongoing focuses on teaching and research have helped set the stage for IUPUI's international leadership role in program planning and improvement.

Dr. Bringle was one of 40 senior faculty recruited as the founding faculty of University College. His leadership at the monthly faculty assembly meetings, at the retreats each semester, and on key committees has been significant in developing, implementing, and assessing UC's policies and practices, which have resulted in unprecedented increases in IUPUI's retention and graduation rates (half of which, according to Victor Borden and Gary Pike's research, is attributable to programs, with the other half resulting from changes in admissions standards). Dr. Bringle regularly taught a first-year success seminar until 2005. His personal involvement with the students and the material in this key course has allowed him to be him particularly influential in the continuous improvement with both the content and the pedagogy of that course.

When the IUPUI Chancellor called for doubling civic engagement, the primary index was participation in service learning. Thanks to Dr. Bringle's leadership, the campus met that challenge in half the targeted time. In addition, Dr. Bringle played a key role in IUPUI becoming classified by Carnegie Foundation as a community engaged campus, which included being recognized for community engaged teaching.

The awards bestowed on IUPUI as a function of its reputation in service learning and community engagement attest to Dr. Bringle's leadership and to his ability to effectively represent the campus on national and international platforms. In fact, Dr. Bringle is among the top five leaders in service learning in the world. Along, with Julie Hatcher, he has played a significant role in articulating what has become a widely accepted definition of service learning, a definition that centers service learning on its relationship to the classroom and to learning. Dr. Bringle has also provided leadership to students simultaneously studying abroad and participating in service learning. He recently co-edited a book on ***International Service Learning***, which will provide significant contributions to this emerging pedagogy.

Dr. Bringle, probably more than any other faculty member, built the foundation for IUPUI's RISE initiative through his participation in the working group on experiential education, which was part of developing IUPUI's current academic plan. He advocated for the expectation that each student will participate in multiple experiential education experiences and for articulating the institutional criteria for all experiential education. The Association of American Colleges and Universities, working with the leaders of the National Survey of Student Engagement, has actively promoted student participation in experiential education as a function of the strong relationship found nationally between such participation and student success. Students who are engaged learn more and are more likely to be academically successful. They are also more likely to persist and graduate. Furthermore, there is a disproportionately positive impact on minority students. Dr. Bringle has, therefore, played a key role in ensuring that IUPUI students have the opportunity to become engaged learners through the Rise initiative and for them to reap the benefits from their participation.

I am pleased to write in support of Dr. Bringle's nomination for this prestigious award. His distinguished contributions merit careful and thorough consideration. Sometimes awards are "polished" by their recipients. Dr. Bringle is, I believe, such a potential recipient. He has gone the "extra mile" every day for many years at IUPUI to help make our institution a stronger place for teaching and learning. He has made a difference. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott E. Evenbeck
Dean Emeritus
Professor of Psychology Emeritus