May 31, 2001

Dear Colleagues,

The cognitive science program at Indiana University is the fastest growing major in the College of Arts and Sciences. Prior NSF support has lead to the development of a cutting-edge curriculum that focuses on the interdisciplinary skills required by the study of intelligent systems. We are very proud of the accomplishments of the program and its undergraduates. The College will continue its support of Cognitive Science, and views the program as a flagship program for the Bloomington campus.

The Cognitive Science faculty have a long history of producing software for use in the classroom, and some of this software (such as Tarsky’s World) has become commercial successes. We applaud such efforts, in part because we believe that research and teaching can and do mesh quite closely, with excellence in research creating excellence in teaching that then feeds back on itself by attracting students to the frontiers of current research and by preparing them to be innovative problems solvers when they leave the classroom. The tight loop between cutting-edge research and its presentation in the classroom serves both the students, who learn the most recent findings, as well as the faculty as they expose their ideas to a fresh set of minds in the classroom.

Indiana University is committed to the development of this software. In particular, we will work with the primary investigators to identify courses at IU that could use the programs in teaching units and help with the assessment portion of the grant. These will include courses in linguistics, psychology, logic, biology, mathematics, computer science, cognitive science and neuroscience. We will work with chairs of these program to identify the courses and integrate the software into existing curriculum.

Accordingly, I heartily endorse this project and will do all that I can to support it.

Sincerely,

Linda B. Smith
Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education