September 27, 2025

RE: Support letter for retaining the Department of Statistics

Dear Academic Planning Committee Members,

I am writing to emphasize the importance of statistics as a discipline and to express concern over your consideration of diminishing its presence at your institution. Statistics is an essential field because it provides the tools to make sense of data, transforming raw numbers into meaningful insights. In a world overflowing with information, it helps us identify patterns, measure uncertainty, and make informed decisions. From guiding public health policies and advancing technologies, to shaping business strategies and informing the social sciences, statistics ensures that conclusions are evidence-based rather than guesswork. It is a cornerstone of both scientific inquiry and everyday decision-making.

For these reasons, every flagship university should have a strong and visible statistics department. Statistics is not only a standalone field but also a vital support system for nearly every discipline on campus. A dedicated department fosters innovation in theory and methodology, equips students with critical skills that are increasingly in demand across industries, and strengthens the university's ability to contribute to research that addresses society's most pressing challenges. Maintaining, supporting and further investing in a statistics department is a clear signal of a university's commitment to excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration, and leadership in a data-driven world.

Conversely, closing a statistics department is counterproductive. Doing so would diminish the quality of research across disciplines that rely on rigorous data analysis, while depriving students of training in one of the most valuable skill sets for today's workforce. While some statistical methods can be taught in other programs, only a dedicated department can advance the field itself and provide the expertise necessary for cutting-edge discoveries. In effect, eliminating statistics would not only reduce academic opportunities but also limit your university's ability to remain relevant and

innovative at a time when data literacy is essential for societal progress. In addition, eliminating the statistics department would diminish your ability to attract qualified students.

I urge you to recognize the indispensable role of statistics and ensure that your university continues to support, invest in, and champion its statistics department. Closing the department is short-sighted and counter to your long-term strategic needs. It would be a gross failure of your academic leadership. You will fail current and future students by depriving them of essential skills needed to succeed in the modern workforce.

I urge you to reconsider not only the elimination of the well-regarded Department of Statistics, but to direct further resources and trust to this department so that it can foster research, teaching and service in statistics, data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and allied fields for your campus. This would be the bold move befitting of a flagship university.

Please let me know should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

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