
Request to Reconsider the Proposed Elimination of the Statistics Department

From Dr. Ladányi Márta <Ladanyi.Marta@uni-mate.hu>

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To Tiffany Heng-Moss <thengmoss2@unl.edu>; Chancellor Bennett <chancellorbennett@unl.edu>; president@nebraska.edu <president@nebraska.edu>; Karen Griffin <kgriffin2@unl.edu>; corpsec@nebraska.edu <corpsec@nebraska.edu>; Bhaskar Bhattacharya <bbhattacharya8@unl.edu>

Caution: Non-NU Email

Dear Chancellor Bennett and the Members of the Academic Planning Committee and Board of Regents,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed closure of the Department of Statistics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

I feel compelled to add my voice in support of a department that is not only vital to its own students but also to the broader academic and research community.

After more than 35 years in research and as the head of the Department of Statistics at the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences,

I have seen firsthand how critical statistical literacy is for publication success.

The Department of Statistics at UNL serves as a foundational pillar for a wide array of disciplines.

Its coursework, faculty expertise, and consulting services provide essential support to students and researchers across the university,

from agriculture and biomedical sciences to history and social sciences.

Without a centralized, dedicated department, the quality of this support would be compromised,

directly impacting the rigor and reproducibility of research conducted at UNL.

The proposed "distributed model" would weaken the intellectual community that statisticians rely on to stay current and effective,

ultimately undermining the very research, it is intended to support.

Our own highly successful Agrarian Statistician Master's program is a testament to the importance of educating scientists in agriculture in statistics.

This action would not only harm UNL's reputation but also hinder its ability to attract top-tier students and faculty in a rapidly growing and crucial field.

The long-term costs of this decision — in lost talent, diminished research, and a compromised academic standing — would far outweigh any short-term budget savings.

Furthermore, the decision to close a statistics department runs contrary to national and global academic trends.

At a time when universities are expanding their quantitative programs to meet the explosive

demand for data scientists and analysts,
eliminating a strong and respected department is a shortsighted move.

It is particularly important now, in the age of artificial intelligence, that students have a strong statistical foundation. Without it, they risk misusing AI tools for statistical analysis without truly understanding or being able to check the output, potentially leading to flawed research and even academic plagiarism.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider this proposal.

The value of the Department of Statistics is not just financial; it is a critical investment in the future of the university, its students, and its research enterprise. I hope that you will choose to protect and strengthen this invaluable department for generations to come.

Sincerely,

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