17 September 2025

President Jeff Gold
The University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Nebraska, USA

Dear President Gold

I am alarmed and dismayed to learn of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's plan to abolish the Department of Statistics and terminate all tenured and tenure-track faculty. At a time when data-driven decision-making is more critical than ever, this decision not only jeopardizes the future of statistics at UNL but also undermines the integrity of every department at UNL that relies on statistical expertise.

I am a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, and a Fellow of the International Institute of Forecasters; I have served as Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Forecasting*, Editor of the *Journal of Statistical Software*, Editor of the *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics*, and I'm currently Editor-in-Chief of *The R Journal*; I have served as Chair of the largest statistics department in Australia.
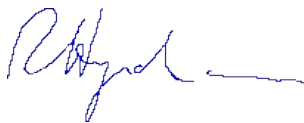
As a statistician dedicated to the advancement of statistical science and its applications, I find it deeply troubling that UNL would consider such a drastic measure. I urge you to reconsider this course of action. The elimination of the Statistics Department will have far-reaching consequences, not only for UNL but for the broader academic and research community. It will also irreparably damage UNL's reputation as a leading research institution.

UNL Statistics has made significant contributions to the field, and includes several highly-influential researchers whose work has had a profound impact. I have personally worked with two of your faculty — Professor Heike Hofmann and Professor Susan VanderPlas — of whom I have the highest respect. Professor Hofmann is a leading figure in data visualization, whose work has shaped how data is presented and understood globally. Professor VanderPlas is a rising star in statistical computing and statistical graphics, who recently won a prestigious NSF career award.

Statistics is the backbone of modern research across all fields, from agriculture and medicine to engineering and social sciences. The expertise provided by statisticians is essential for designing experiments, analyzing data, and interpreting results. Without a dedicated Statistics Department, UNL will lose its competitive edge in research and innovation, and a fall in research quality and rankings is inevitable.

I implore you to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions that preserve the Statistics Department and its invaluable contributions to UNL and the broader academic community.

Yours sincerely

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