

**From:** Thomas Spoeher <tspoehr2@huskers.unl.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:15 PM  
**To:** Christopher Bilder <bilder@unl.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: We need your picture!

Also here's my feedback:

As a first year, native Nebraskan PhD student in statistics I feel inclined to share my thoughts and feelings on the proposed budget cuts. I feel the proposed budget cuts would be a grave injustice not only for the faculty and students of statistics department but for the state of Nebraska as a whole. I have lived in Nebraska for the past 22 years of my life and have seen the impact which statistics and data driven solutions can provide.

I already have a master's degree in mathematics from UNO and I received an internship at Smeal Fire Apparatus in Snyder, NE this past summer where I worked as a Supply Chain and Logistics intern. With my gained analytical experience I was able to create an automated vendor quality assessment system which in turn increased profitability for the company. This not only benefited me but because of what I did this helped us switch vendors and enable the shop to be able to meet quarterly goals which resulted in a plant wide bonuses. Not only did this leave a good impression with my superiors, but enabled two hundred fellow Nebraskans to have more money to spend in the economy of Nebraska. With a PhD in Statistics and a desire to stay in state after graduation more meaningful procedures would be created to continue to not only generate myself an income but help Nebraskan citizens. A PhD in Statistics would give me more skills to continue to do work like this for the industry throughout the state.

However, not only have I seen the impact of statistics at my place of work but in the agricultural sector. My fiancée is from a farm and getting seeds which yield the best crops is a means to an income for her family. These seeds are developed in labs and tested. These results are verified and analyzed through statistical means. Cutting the statistics department would partially eliminate the state's ability to perform important agricultural analysis which improve the state's primary economic sector. Since UNL is the only university in the state with a PhD in statistics, eliminating people valuable to agricultural sector seems counterproductive to statewide economic hopes.

If UNL cuts their statistics program I do intend to transfer to another Big Ten university. The reason I choose Nebraska is because of my personal ties to this state, my love of the genuinely caring helpful faculty, and the familial feeling on the third floor of Hardin Hall. Our department provides services to other departments including offering necessary classes to help others gain meaningful data driven insights along with analyses for others thesis's and dissertations. We collaborate across fields to further research at the Nebraska's only R1 institution. I believe our department is a crucial part to UNL's standing as an R1 institution and plays a vital role in getting Nebraska back into the AAU.

In short, I believe both personally and from a statewide perspective that these budget cuts are egregious and in poor taste for the university. I hope your consideration is not taken lightly.

- A native Nebraskan and 22 year state tax payer