

Christopher Bilder

From: Ved Piyush <vedpiyush93@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 9:46 PM
To: Christopher Bilder
Subject: Support Letter submitted to UNL

Caution: Non-NU Email

Hello Professor Bilder,

I used the Fall 2025 Budget Reduction Feedback Form to submit a support letter for our department.

Here is what I submitted:

Dear UNL Administrators,

My name is Ved Piyush, and I am a 2023 PhD graduate from the Department of Statistics at UNL. I earned my BS in Statistics in 2011, my MS in 2018, and finally my PhD in 2023. My connection to statistics goes back even further since my father worked as a Statistician for the Government of India for more than 35 years. This field has been an inseparable part of my life, and I owe much of my career success to the excellent training and mentorship I received at UNL. I currently work in the technology industry as an Artificial Intelligence engineer, building large-scale solutions that are used globally.

I am writing to ask you to reconsider the decision to close the Statistics Department. Closing this department would not only weaken UNL's academic reputation but also cause lasting harm to research and student opportunities.

During my time at UNL, I worked on projects in cancer drug discovery, personalized nutrition, and forecasting maize crop yields from drone images using AI. These are examples of research areas that have national importance. If the department is closed, UNL risks losing its role in such critical contributions.

The Statistics Department also provides essential support for agriculture, animal science, and food science, which are at the heart of Nebraska's economy. Well-designed experiments are key to producing reliable results, avoiding waste, and creating innovations that can succeed commercially, such as improved seed varieties or livestock feed. Without a strong statistics department, it will be extremely difficult for UNL to ensure the same quality and efficiency in its research.

Graduates of the department have consistently shown their value in the job market. Many of my peers went on to work for the US government, leading universities, major insurance companies, and global technology firms. Personally, I was able to intern at LinkedIn and IBM and later received offers from Meta, Adobe, Travelers Insurance, Liberty Mutual, Mutual of Omaha, and Hudl. These opportunities would not have been possible without the rigorous training I received at UNL. The department's track record in placing graduates in top positions is also a powerful tool for recruiting future students.

I recognize that UNL faces serious budget pressures. But closing the department would not truly save money. It may reduce spending in the short term, but it will likely cost more in the long run through poorly designed research, missed grant opportunities, and fewer students enrolling in programs. At a time when the demand for statistics and data science is only growing worldwide, eliminating this program would be a step backward for the university.

The Statistics Department is not just another academic unit. It is central to the success of UNL's research mission, to the state of Nebraska, and to the career opportunities of its students. I urge you to reconsider this decision and instead find ways to strengthen and promote the department.

Thank you for your time and attention. Please feel free to reach out to me if I can provide more details about my experiences.

Sincerely,
Ved Piyush, PhD
UNL Statistics Department, Class of 2023