APC Hearing

Petronela Radu

Leland J. and Dorothy H. Olson Professor and Chair

Department of Mathematics

October 10, 2025

Impact of Proposed Elimination of Statistics Department

The Department of Mathematics is the largest producer of SCH (over 31K) and profit (over \$10M) at UNL. It would be one of the most affected units by the proposed cuts.

- Over 100 of the Mathematics majors with a Data Science option and Data Science majors in Mathematics have to take multiple Statistics courses, most of them at advanced level (300-400), which would require faculty with active research programs and broad expertise in Statistics, a rapidly evolving field.

- The fast growing Data Science major built on a natural collaboration among Math, Stats and School of Computing has over 125 students (in less than 3 years) is likely to lose momentum and result to a loss of DS majors in other units as well.

Impact (cont.)

- A proposed online Master Degree in Data Science (with an expected profit of about $400K/year) would receive little interest from prospective students without offering true Statistics expertise.
- Over 450 MAT degrees awarded to teachers in NE by the Departments of Mathematics and Teaching, Learning & Teacher Education require taking STAT 811T-812T courses, which do not appear on the list of courses to be offered in the future.

Impact on Research Programs and Collaborations

- Several faculty members in Mathematics have collaborated with faculty in Statistics, written papers and grant proposals together.
- A new TT hire in Data Science that joined the Department of Mathematics in Fall 2024 is supposed to mark the beginning of strong investments in a field that sees explosive growth at other institutions. Eliminating the Department of Statistics would endanger the development of this new area at UNL which has large financial potential, both through research and teaching initiatives.
- Due to the centrality of Statistics, many UNL units and NE stakeholders would struggle to find expertise when needed.
- After having hired 5 new faculty members in Statistics recently, eliminating the entire department now would send chills in hiring processes for other science units for years to come.
- Eliminating Statistics would lead to a loss of credibility for UNL and science departments in Big 10 and would jeopardize the UNL efforts to rejoin AAU.

An Alternative Path

- Among R1 institutions, Statistics Departments are some of the most profitable units. By investing to build a strong and visionary Department of Statistics, UNL can create a revenue stream that ensures financial sustainability for the entire campus.
- I urge the APC to reject the proposal of eliminating the Department of Statistics to protect the well-being and growth of STEM departments at UNL and of Data Science as a new discipline at UNL.

Thank You!