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**Sent:** Thursday, October 30, 2025 4:58 PM

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**Subject:** Executive Graduate Council Recommendation on Proposed UNL Graduate Program Eliminations

Dear Members of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents,

On October 28, 2025, the University of Nebraska Executive Graduate Council met to discuss and vote on the proposals from the UNL Chancellor to eliminate graduate programs in Community and Regional Planning; Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; Educational Administration; Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion Design; and Statistics. Prior to our vote, we discussed the proposals from the UNL administration and the recommendations provided by the UNL Graduate Council. Subsequently, we voted unanimously (8-0) to retain each of the graduate programs proposed for elimination.

The Council recognizes that these proposed eliminations are intended to address budgetary concerns within the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. However, our review identified concerns regarding the accuracy, interpretation, and application of the data and metrics used in the analyses supporting these proposals. In several cases, discrepancies were noted between institutional data and department-reported figures, including current enrollments and degrees awarded. Such variation underscores the need for clarification and validation before reaching decisions of this magnitude. Before proceeding, an independent verification of data and methodology is essential to ensure the Regents' decision rests on accurate and defensible information.

We are also concerned about the accelerated timeline for implementing program eliminations, given the scope and potential long-term impact of these actions. Rapid implementation also risks unintended negative effects, including loss of confidence among donors and endowment holders, the displacement of a significant number of graduate students despite teach-out plans, and negative impact on land-grant and statewide mission. A more deliberate approach would allow for careful resolution of data discrepancies, assessment of potential effects on students and faculty, and assurance that any recommendations align with the criteria for bona fide program discontinuation outlined in the Graduate College Bylaws.

Rushing a process before governance bodies have resolved methodological concerns undermines shared governance and could draw scrutiny from accrediting agencies. A more deliberate approach would allow for careful resolution of data discrepancies, assessment of potential effects on students and faculty, and assurance that any recommendations align with the criteria for bona fide program discontinuation outlined in the Graduate College Bylaws. Preliminary information from the Academic Planning Committee hearings suggests that none of the nine criteria outlined in the Graduate College

Bylaws have been met. At this time, the evidence currently available does not appear to meet that standard.

Accordingly, the Executive Graduate Council recommends that the Board of Regents defer action until an independent review of the data and methodology can be completed. Such a review would strengthen confidence in the decision-making process, demonstrate prudent fiscal and academic stewardship, and uphold the University of Nebraska's commitment to transparency, accuracy, and shared governance.

Sincerely,

Members of the Executive Graduate Council:

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