Herein we respond to the Ten-Year Review of the department authored by Professors Balantekin, Nagel, Porter, Reinemann, and Wang. We are grateful to the review committee for its thorough, thoughtful, and detailed review. We count sixteen recommendations in the report, and we find these very valuable as we proceed.

We are also grateful for the many positive and supportive comments made, especially that “The Department is to be commended for its foresight and vision in establishing this remarkable collection of faculty, and in their extraordinary success at establishing a collegial, effective, and world renowned department.” We also agreed that many factors threaten the department, including a “dire need of new faculty.” It is evident that the department is at a crossroads, and action is necessary if we are to sustain the department’s historical prominence.

In this response we first note a few minor corrections to the report. Then, rather than reiterating all of the committee’s recommendations, we have summarized and grouped these into two categories, namely, (1) specific recommendations, and (2) broader strategic issues. We address these in turn below.

**Corrections**

The following are minor corrections or amendments to the report that we think are important to note, simply because they further support the review committee’s conclusions.

p. 2, first paragraph. The counts here are slightly inaccurate. It is correct that, by headcount, there are 10 faculty with joint appointments, including Jun Zhu, currently on leave, and these faculty account for 3.75 FTE by salary, and 4.5 FTE by tenure home. Now that Doksum has retired, by headcount there are also 10 faculty who are 100% appointed in statistics (the same headcount as for joint appointees), but these faculty account for 9.25% FTE by salary (the legacy of his position is such that Nordheim’s salary is only .25 FTE from L&S although he is appointed 100% in statistics).

p. 2, end of second paragraph. We believe that joint appointees should have committee responsibilities proportionate to their appointment split, and therefore, besides a decrease in faculty teaching capacity, there is also a similar decrease in committee duties.

**Specific Recommendations and Actions**

In the report we saw four specific recommendations that we will act upon immediately. These are:

1. Provide support for professional development and climate for graduate students.

   We will develop funding to encourage students to participate in professional society activities and we will sponsor a monthly lunch that will focus on professional development, career choices, job application
strategies, etc. We believe that these will begin to foster greater camaraderie among students, and enhance in several ways the graduate student experience.

2. Protect probationary faculty from heavy administrative loads.
   We will immediately and carefully review our assignments for committees and other administrative tasks, and make adjustments accordingly.

3. Fill the vacant 50% FTE staff position.
   We stand ready to implement this as soon as the college is ready and able to do so.

4. Work with the college on space needs and space quality.
   We will begin immediately to work with Assistant Dean Chris Bruhn and others in L&S to make them aware of problems with the physical facilities in the Medical Science Center.

Broader Recommendations and Actions

Beyond these specific issues, we see three broader categories of recommendations: the need for strategic planning, a focus on faculty hiring, and the context of statistics in the college and on the campus. It is clear from the report that strategic planning is needed to provide the framework through which these interrelated matters can be addressed. Through our existing committee structure, and through new structures, we will: (1) consider expanding, contracting, and streamlining course offerings; (2) consider converting our MS to a professional degree; (3) solidify, develop, and enhance connections with other units; (4) forecast and address IT needs, including exploring connections to other units; (5) engage administration on issue of statistics teaching and research across campus; and (6) plan faculty hiring in connection with the above considerations. We hope to complete most of these processes in the fall semester.

As regards faculty hiring, we agree that the department “is suffering more than its fair share of ‘doing more with less.’” This decline in faculty comes at the same time as an increase in demand for courses, and thus serious access problems are arising. We also agree that addressing this loss of faculty (4.25 FTE from 2003 to 2009) is critical to addressing our decline in reputation. Finally, our department has been a pioneer in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarship, and faculty hiring is critical to maintaining and strengthening our ties to other units. We will use the strategic planning process described above to address these issues.

To discuss the context of statistics in the college and on the campus, it is important to reiterate the nature of statistics as a scholarly discipline. To the layperson, statistics is about summarizing data (e.g. as in baseball), while many scientists outside of statistics guess that statistics research involves the analysis of big, complicated data sets. In fact, the primary activity of the statistician scholar is the development of new methods for extracting information from data, especially in light of random variation. Research success depends on having knowledge of a broad array of sophisticated mathematical, computational, and statistical tools. Frequently, this success is further fueled by intimate collaboration with researchers in other disciplines.

It is troubling to us, therefore, to observe, as the review does, that statistics courses are currently being taught in numerous departments, especially at the introductory level, with no involvement of our department of any kind. This is a situation with few parallels on campus, and yet it reflects a duplication of effort and (perhaps) expertise that the university can ill afford.

Engaging with L&S and Other Campus Units

This review is a call to action, and we are determined to rise to the call, to the extent that we are able, to effect positive change. At the same time, the review notes that we must rely on our college and campus to be engaged in this process. L&S has the potential to be a campus leader and to provide a national model by working with other units to support the discipline of statistics on campus and the centrality of the statistics department. This will require difficult but essential conversations with several other colleges and schools, however, because of the broad impact of our field and the prevailing redundancy noted above. We hope that, in collaboration with our college and campus partners, the next fifty years of the department of statistics will reflect and continue the great successes of the last fifty years.