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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## UNI LAYOFFS AND CLOSURE EFFECTS ON STUDENTS AND CURRICULUM HAVE BEEN UNDER-REPORTED

*The effect of cutting 25% of UNI programs is enormous and unprecedented. Attempts to downplay the effect should be challenged.*

(CEDAR FALLS, Iowa) There are significant number of errors and inconsistencies in the academic program cuts drawn up by administration. The cuts proposed at UNI will have a domino effect that impacts the education of virtually all students at UNI. They could also cripple UNI's STEM education initiatives that the governor himself has promoted as being important for Iowa's future prosperity.

According to Anne Lair, Director of French Studies and Siegrun Bubser, Director of German Studies, actual departmental records and official numbers provided by the UNI Registrar's Office verify that,

- Currently there are **55 students** with a declared major or minor in German.
- Currently there are **56 students** with a declared major or minor in French.
- During the 2010-2011 academic year, the faculty in French and German taught more than 1,200 students.
- The University has not addressed the issue of how students in these programs will continue and complete their major or minor degrees in fall 2012.
- Many students take and need foreign languages at various levels to either complete their foreign language requirement at UNI or to prepare for global employment with U.S. and international companies.

According to the Geology and Earth Sciences department head Siobahn Morgan

- There are **29 students** who are formally declared Geology majors.
- Biology majors usually must take coursework in either Physics or Earth Science—with both programs facing major reductions in faculty. There has been no information about how upper administration will address this potential bottleneck.
- In 2010-2011 academic year, 1,287 students took courses from the department.
- The cuts in staffing within Geology will negatively impact the Earth Science's department ability to offer content courses needed by Elementary Education majors as well as Science Teaching majors.

According to Betty DeBerg, former department head in Philosophy and World Religions

- The proposal to layoff or force resignation of 4 tenured faculty represents 33% of the faculty in Philosophy and Religion.
- There are **47 students** with a declared major or minor in World Religion.
- There are **58 with declared a major or minor** in Philosophy.
- During the 2010-2011, the faculty taught 1,981 students, many students with other majors take courses in philosophy and religion.
- No plans exist for how the students enrolled will finish their majors.

Closing the physics B.S. is a radical and nearly unprecedented decision for a school the size of UNI. A Physics B.S. degree is the strongest and by far the most popular degree in the department. It is understood this is the degree desired by both companies and graduate programs.

- All undergraduate courses taught by the physics have ten or more students. Classes with 2 or 3 students are obviously not taught, even though this has been reported.
- The UNI Physics department graduates more majors than 60% of all other departments in the U.S. and the graduation rate in physics exceeds both Iowa and Iowa state in terms of graduates per faculty member and graduates per student capita.
- The elimination of the Physics B.S. will have a domino effect on secondary science teaching majors.
- There are currently **73 physics majors and 9 physics minors; 80% of the majors are B.S. students.**

According to Lawrence Escalada, professor of physics and science education, required physics courses for science education majors who are completing the high school physics teaching endorsement will not make and will not be offered if there are no students in the B.S. program to help fill them. *“Eliminating the B.S. is not an isolated decision, secondary science teaching major programs are intertwined. It will ruin physics education at UNI, which is a shame because UNI has a fantastic physics education program, one that is the envy of the nation.”*

The sudden elimination of graduate programs in Sociology, Art Education, Geography, Criminology, Environmental Science, Women’s and Gender Studies, Industrial Technology, and Chemistry (to name a few) is not an isolated decision. Such cuts will forever change the academic climate of UNI and will have a significant effect on course offerings for upper undergraduate students.

Finally, in trying to understand these cuts, it is important to note that the numbers of graduates for many programs that are slated for elimination or suspension are well- above average compared to similar universities, and cutting such programs will make UNI far out of step with similar universities. UNI has a standard reference group of ten similar universities used by the BOR, of these: 100% offer a B.S. in Physics; 100% offer degrees programs in both German and French; 100% offer degrees in Philosophy and/or Philosophy and Religion; 100% offer degrees in Geology.

Faculty are united in their concern that the curricular implications for students in the programs or for students in programs that rely on the courses have not been fully considered.

United Faculty, established in 1976, is the sole negotiating agent for the University of Northern Iowa’s approximately 550 faculty members, and is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

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