

MEMORANDUM

To: Jan Simek, Interim President

From: Susan Martin, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

Re: Closure of the MS in Safety

Date: June 3, 2009

The Department of Nutrition in the College of Education, Health, and Human Science has proposed the termination of the MS in Safety. This proposal originated in the department's assessment that available resources are insufficient to support both the Safety program and the accredited Master's of Public Health (MPH). This decision was the result of a determination by the faculty within the department that in an environment of diminishing resources, the MS program in Safety, with 1.4 full-time-equivalent faculty members specialized in the field (1 FTE has now left the university) and funding for adjunct instruction eliminated, was no longer viable.

The department made a strategic decision to direct resources to a program with quality and long-term sustainability. The resources are not available to develop a strong MPH program and maintain the Safety program at its current level of minimally addressing the needs of the students it serviced. In the opinion of the department head, a program such as the Safety program needs a minimum of four full-time faculty members with terminal degrees in Safety or a related area to sustain the optimal level of 20-30 graduate students and two concentrations. At the time of the faculty vote, there were 1.4 FTE devoted to Safety and only one faculty member who had a Safety background. Because the faculty member with the Safety background has relocated to another university, we no longer have any tenure-line faculty at the University of Tennessee with a research background in Safety emphasizing the fact that this program at its core lacked sustainability

While it is true that this decision leaves the university and the region without a MS program in Safety, there remains a doctoral specialization in Safety at UTK within the doctoral concentration in Community Health. Moreover, Safety programs also exist within the TBR system at several of the community colleges, and in particular at Roane State. Our program could certainly collaborate with other institutions in the state or regionally in assisting them to develop the MS program.

William T. Rogerson, Jr.  
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Governor Phil Bredesen  
Governor's Office  
Tennessee State Capitol  
Nashville, TN 37243-0001

Dr. John D. Petersen  
Office of the President  
831 Andy Holt Tower  
Knoxville, TN 37996-0180

SUBJECT: ELIMINATION OF THE MS IN SAFETY PROGRAM AT UT

Dear Governor Bredesen and President Petersen,

It is my understanding that the Department Head for Nutrition, Dr. Jay Waylan and Dr. Rider, the Dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences, have announced they plan to close the graduate Safety Program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This is the only graduate Safety Program in the state of Tennessee, and one of only a few in the country with an Emergency Management concentration. In this age of significant risk to the many high value facilities in Oak Ridge and elsewhere in the state, such an uniformed, apparently budget driven move by overseers whose point of reference is well outside the safety and emergency management community, is extremely ill advised. It is time that our state and university system leadership, who do have an understanding of the health, safety and emergency management risks that face Tennessee's government services, businesses, and industries, reverse this grave mistake before it is too late.

As a 2005 PhD graduate of this program, and a former program manager of the Department of Energy's Accident Response Group (ARG), the nation's capability to resolve nuclear accidents and incidents, this imprudent action to close our state's only safety and emergency management related program is contrary to the direction underway at the state and federal level to expand the number of professionals with expertise in the areas of risk management, safety and emergency management. I believe this error in judgment stems from the Dean and Department Heads' inability to understand the difference between the value of a professional masters program such as the MS in Safety Program, that addresses real needs in the business community by providing up-to-date experts in safety and emergency management; and a laboratory oriented program such as Nutrition.

The Y-12 National Security Complex where I work, and other similar facilities in Oak Ridge, pay the tuition for many of the Safety professional graduate students. The active actions by regional industries to encourage current employees to complete this degree demonstrates its value to the state's industries and research facilities such as ours, and provides a competitive edge for Tennessee industries in the areas of risk management, safety, security and emergency response. I know of no similar private sector initiatives in the state of Tennessee to fund employees to complete a graduate degree in nutrition.

Since 1983, 340 professionals with concentrations in safety or emergency management have graduated from this important graduate program. Graduate courses have been provided at the UT Oak Ridge location as well as in Knoxville. The Y-12 National Security Complex currently has 5 graduate students enrolled in this program, and 17 individuals who have already graduated. These graduates currently fill various professional positions at Y-12 in the Emergency Management, Operations, Engineering, and Environment, Health and Safety departments. Additional employees have expressed interest in enrolling in this program for the next academic year. It is my understanding that the academic program, including faculty and students, has submitted a plan to continue to offer this important, revenue positive program without the \$14 thousand "soft" dollars that the Dean's office is withdrawing and that is necessitating the closure.

I believe the M.S. in Safety program provides highly skilled professionals who possess the latest knowledge and are aware of the most recent advancements in safety and emergency management. I further contend that these graduates are essential to maintaining the safety culture and emergency management readiness at Y-12, as well other operations located elsewhere in Tennessee. Without a doubt, this continuous supply of risk management, safety and homeland security professionals with their specialized expertise has made a difference across our state. These contributions range from those provided by the construction safety manager or supervisor who makes one small change that prevents a fatality or job injury; to those working at the state level to control risks associated with the nuclear industry and mitigate the damage caused by tornadoes and other natural disasters. If these safety, risk, and emergency management professionals aren't provided by our UT program, where will they come from?

I strongly urge your intervention to insure that our state retains this revenue positive, necessary, and vital Safety professional master's program at the University of Tennessee. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. William T. Rogerson Jr., PhD

Manager, Technical Applications and Factory Deployment  
Y-12 National Security Complex  
Oak Ridge, TN

November 6, 2008

Dr. John Petersen  
Office of the President  
831 Andy Holt Tower  
The University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-0180

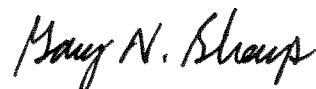
Dear Dr. Petersen:

**University of Tennessee Master of Science, Safety Management and Emergency Management  
Majors**

I am a graduate from the Master of Safety program in the College of Health, Education & Human Sciences, Department of Instructional Technology, Health and Cultural Studies, at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. "The M.S. with a major in safety prepares safety professionals to serve the business, industrial, and public sectors in the fields of safety management, emergency management, safety education, injury and accident assessment, and public safety." I am a Senior Safety Representative for Bechtel Jacobs Company, LLC, in Oak Ridge, serving as Project Fire Protection Manager and the quality graduate education provided by the Safety Program has benefited both me and my employer, who paid for the degree.

In the current economic situation all business sectors are looking for ways to reduce budgets while maintaining quality services. Working for a DOE contractor and an industrial neighbor in East Tennessee, I understand the need to become more efficient with the resources provided in order to perform the mission for our customer. It has been brought to my attention from Safety Program alumni and students that significant cuts to the Master of Safety program may be pending at UT-Knoxville. It is rumored the cuts may be severe enough as to completely disband the program. It is my professional opinion that this would be a very unfortunate circumstance for the safety community in East Tennessee. Working for one of East Tennessee's largest heavy industrial companies it is vital to our success to have quality trained and educated Safety Professionals on our staff. Having access to the Master of Safety program has been beneficial to my success and, indirectly, to my employer. I respectfully request the Safety Program to be continued so that Safety Professionals in East Tennessee will have continued access to the quality training provided by the Master of Safety Program.

Sincerely,



Gary N. Sharp,  
Project Fire Protection Manager

GNS: gns  
Attachments: None

cc: Honorable Phil Bredesen, Governor  
Dr. Jimmy Cheek, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Dr. Susan Martin, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Barbara F. Scott  
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November 4, 2008

Governor Phil Bredesen  
Governor's Office  
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Dr. John D. Peterson  
Office of the President  
831 Andy Holt Tower  
Knoxville, TN 37996-0180

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF THE GRADUATE SAFETY PROGRAM

Dear Governor Bredesen and President Peterson,

On October 21, 2008, I learned from fellow graduate students that the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) announced the closure of the graduate safety program including the concentrations of safety management and Emergency Management. This announcement was confirmed by the faculty. Currently, there are 33 students enrolled in this program including myself. When I inquired to the reason for closure of the program, I was told that the decision was made in an effort to reduce costs to the UTK. I was told that the instructional staff will be absorbed fully into the Department of Public Health, resulting in no reduction of permanent instructional or administrative staff. I was told that the actual cost saving would be approximately \$14,000 spent annually to pay the adjunct instructors from area industries and businesses. While I appreciate that the Dean has found a way to retain the current instructional staff and to allow current enrollees to complete the program, I am very concerned about the wisdom in the decision to close the only professional graduate program in safety and emergency management in the entire state of Tennessee.

I have attached a copy of my resume only to illustrate that I have a particular insight into this matter after spending 30 years of my professional career in the field of environmental, safety, and health in industry, federal, and state government. Today, industrial and utility facilities all maintain safety professionals on staff at some level of the organization. This fact is clearly illustrated by the array of current students in this program. Present enrollment in this program include employees of the primary contractor at Oak Ridge Laboratories, local fire and emergency services, oil and gas distribution companies, major local industries, and state and local government. Students from the public health program, veterinarian science, and law school have benefitted from courses focusing on counterterrorism issues and regulatory compliance offered in this curriculum, as well.

As Tennessee works diligently to attract and retain major industrial partners, such as Denso, Saturn, Dell, and Volkswagen, it is important to provide educational services to support employee development for world class leadership in their field. I had the pleasure of attending the International Emergency Management Association Conference to co-present a paper with Dr. Susan Smith, Graduate Safety Program Coordinator. Dr. Smith received recognition from this organization for authoring one of the top three papers presented at this conference. Many participants requested permission to use the research presented by UTK representatives in their respective programs in the United States, France, Russia, and China. These professionals from more than 30 countries have recognized UTK's graduate safety program as exemplary in the field of safety and emergency management.

I am well aware of the current budget restraints the state and UTK are facing in this downturned economy. However, discontinuing a singular program designed to serve the needs of Tennessee's industrial and public service partners is short-sighted of the future. Challenging the program to meet the needs of a larger demographic throughout the state will generate additional revenue for the UTK. For example, Tennessee is one of 26 states delegated by OSHA to administer safety regulations and oversee compliance. TOSHA has over 100 employees throughout the state, many who have said they would pursue enrollment in this program if it were available outside of the Knoxville area. The program should be expanded to include distance learning or satellite programs for professionals in Chattanooga, Nashville, Memphis, and Tri-Cities area. Tennessee will now lose this revenue to neighboring states that have developed effective graduate safety programs to meet the needs of their industry and public service partners.

In closing, I respectfully request that the University and the Board of Trustees reconsider the decision to close this valuable program. I petition UTK to concentrate efforts to grow the program to reach those professionals in Tennessee who will benefit from furthering their education in the fields of Safety Management and Emergency Management and, subsequently, increase revenue for UTK. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration in reinstating this critical program in the UTK curriculum.

Sincerely,



Barbara F. Scott  
Environmental Specialist  
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

cc: Dr. Jimmy Cheek, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Dr. Susan Martin, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Dr. Carolyn R. Hodges, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies  
Dr. Robert Rider, College of Education, Health, and Human Services  
Dr. Jay Whelan, Department of Nutrition  
Mr. James L. Murphy, III, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees  
Mr. Charles Anderson, Jr., Board of Trustees  
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