

12 July 2021

Chancellor of The University of Western Australia
Professor Robert Shenton French, AC

Dear Professor French,

Re: Macquarie University Sociology staff urge you to intervene in School of Social Sciences cutback proposals

We, staff of Sociology at Macquarie University's School of Social Sciences, write to express strong opposition to proposals to end the disciplines of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Western Australia.

These disciplines are vital to understanding how societies function and tracking the consequences of massive social transformations that impact the lives of all of us. Without this knowledge we are ill equipped to build the kind of society in which we all want to live.

These plans are short-sighted and overlook the central role that the social sciences play in providing the essential skills and knowledge for the emerging workforce. Moreover, they undermine the role of the University as an institution devoted to critical thinking and debate. This is what distinguishes a university from a technical training college.

These measures are draconian and forfeit UWA's responsibility to protect these disciplines as vibrant intellectual spaces in the state of Western Australia and as essential parts of an undergraduate curriculum and postgraduate research opportunity.

The University needs to abandon these plans and respond appropriately and fairly to its apparent budget difficulties. Abolishing entire disciplines at a major University is alarming and not an appropriate response to these problems.

We urge that University management works with staff to protect these disciplines and opportunities for staff and students to continue their work and study in these areas
Signed

Assoc Prof Ben Spies-Butcher (Discipline Chair)
Prof Amanda Wise
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Assoc Prof Raj Velayutham
Assoc Prof Shaun Wilson
Dr Harry Blatterer
Dr Norbert Ebert
Dr Tobia Fattore
Dr Nick Harrigan
Dr Justine Lloyd
Dr Peter Rogers
Dr Jyhene Kebsi
Dr Hangyoung Lee
Dr Jacqueline Mackaway
Dr Rebecca Sheehan
Dr Adam Stebbing
Dr Randa Abdel Fattah
Dr Charlotte Overgaard
Dr Antonina Gentile
Dr Siobhan Irving
Dr Dongju Lee
Kate Manlik
Dr Karl Nicholas Moll
Hon Prof Michael Fine
Dr Philippa Bellemore
Dr Carlos Palacios

cc. Chair of the Academic Board, Winthrop Professor Raymond Da Silva Rosa
Academic staff representative on the UWA Senate, Dr Nin Kirkham

Signatures Updated 14 July