

Hertz, Lisa Ann

From: Kazunari Koike [kkoike@hsc.wvu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2008 2:21 PM
To: Bruce E Bursten, Dean
Cc: Interim Chancellor Jan F Simek; Melton, Lindsay Burke
Subject: Program Cut

Dear Dean, College of Arts and Sciences,

As one of the Alumni from UT Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, I was saddened by being informed of a proposed closure of the department. I graduated in 1981 with a Ph.D. degree in Hearing Science, and the education I received from UT served me very well in my academic career. I have always been proud of my association with UT. I am originally from Tokyo, Japan and heard about an excellent aural habilitation/rehabilitation program under the direction of the recently retired faculty, Dr. Carl W. Asp before deciding to come to study at UT twenty or so years ago. UT Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology has been known internationally, and of course nationally for a long time, and it is a shame to close down such long-standing program just because of a budget shortfall.

I currently teach and hold a clinical position in the Department of Otolaryngology as part of West Virginia University School of Medicine. I often encourage my own undergraduate students to seek a possibility of getting the graduation education at UT, even if that means an out-of-state tuition and enrollment. Being in the state-supported land grant university in West Virginia, I certainly understand a constant battle with regards to a budget shortage, however, that should never justify a rationale for closure of a reputable academic program which has served a very important role of educating speech pathologists and audiologists who serve for people with speech and/or hearing impairments and disabilities. A facility need to create more space for an athletic department is far from the just cause, either, if that is a part of factors being considered. As great as the UT football and all other sports at UT, the University of Tennessee should continue to place its academic programs as its first priority above anything else.

By no means, I consider myself as a great contributor to various UT related funds, but I have contributed consistently to UT for a long time, knowing that my monetary contributions are being utilized for academic enhancement for students and faculty. Again, this recent announcement for the possible closure of the academic department is very disappointing, and I urge those who have a decision-making capacity including the Board of Trustees to reconsider such ill-conceived, hasty decision.

cc: Chancellor' office
Provost's office

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