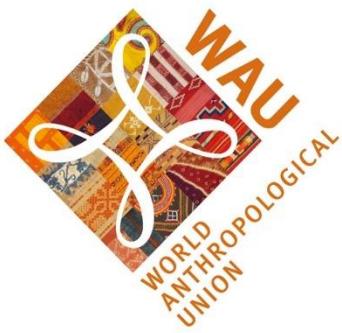


July 17, 2021

Professor Amanda Davies
 Head of School of Social Sciences
 The University of Western Australia
 35 Stirling Highway
 Crawley WA 6009
 Australia

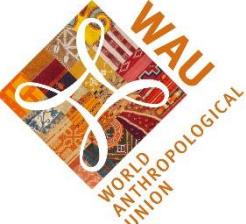


Dear Professor Davies,

The Steering Committee of the World Anthropological Union (WAU) collectively representing the voice of anthropologists across the world are writing to you in deep anguish and distress. It has come to our attention that the University of Western Australia is proposing to dissolve the discipline group of Anthropology and Sociology, part of the School of Social Sciences of your esteemed university. We the World Anthropological Union have long looked up to the scholarship and sterling academic works produced by this department, which is deemed to be one of the best departments of anthropology in Australia and which hosted the IUAES Inter-Congress in 2011. In the current situation of crises of global warming, environmental and political conflicts, food security, forced migrations and multiple issues related to the security and survival of indigenous populations, issues with which the disciplines of anthropology and sociology are a centrally concerned, these disciplines need to be nurtured and made even more readily available to students rather than be dispensed with.

It is all the more imperative to keep the discipline in its present form as both disciplines are ranked as “4” (“at or above international standard”) in the ERA, and also the discipline group has attracted several prestigious grants and fellowships. Two UWA staff have even been awarded the prestigious Curl Essay Prize given by the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* for the best essay published in it. As is well known to the anthropological community across the world, it is one of the most prestigious journals in the discipline.

It is also well known that Anthropology and Sociology is a popular subject at UWA with a student enrolment that is the third highest in the School of Social Sciences for undergraduate classes. Anthropology graduates are engaged in critical, practical and applied research and employed in jobs in such sectors as heritage clearance and immigration and multicultural affairs that are of great benefit to the Australian nation as well as to concerns of



humanity in general and of marginalized and the indigenous people in particular.

For the last two years, the pandemic situation has clearly indicated that mere technological progress is not going to take humankind very far, as technology without the wisdom to use it judiciously and ethically can cause more harm than good. With recurrent environmental disasters striking one after another, issues of vulnerability, marginalization and flawed approaches to development and democratic participation are also getting highlighted. Under the circumstances, humanistic disciplines such as anthropology and sociology are most relevant to steer humankind in the right direction. The ethnographic method developed in anthropology helps to provide deep analytical insights into human causations and behaviour, and it is a specialized method not used by any other discipline. Anthropological methodology has been found extremely useful in engaging with situations of human crises all across the world.

Keeping in view the great applied and humane value of the discipline of anthropology, the excellence of your department in UWA and its popularity with the student community, we make a fervent appeal for you to retain the discipline group in its present form in the university and also to retain the excellent staff in full strength.

Sincerely,

Junji Koizumi, Ph.D.

President, IUAES

International Union of Anthropological
and Ethnological Sciences
Co-Chair, WAU

World Anthropological Union

Isaac Nyamongo, Ph.D.

Chair, WCAA

World Council of
Anthropological Associations
Co-Chair, WAU

World Anthropological Union

on behalf of the Steering Committee of WAU, the World Anthropological Union