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From: Howard Woodhouse <hrw652@mail.usask.ca>

Date: Fri, Jun 18, 2010 at 4:44 PM

Subject: Firing of Dr Denis Rancourt

To: allan.rock@uottawa.ca

Cc: mjolicoeur@blgcanada.com, denis.rancourt@gmail.com

Dear Mr Rock,

I have attached a letter voicing my condemnation of the firing of Dr Denis Rancourt, a professor of physics at the University of Ottawa. I look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

Dr Howard Woodhouse, Professor, Department of Educational Foundations,
University of Saskatchewan.

Allan Rock,
President,
University of Ottawa,
Ottawa,
ON

Friday 18 June 2010

Dear Mr Rock,

I am writing to protest the disgraceful treatment of Dr Denis Rancourt inflicted by you in the name of the University of Ottawa. By approving the firing of a physicist of Dr Rancourt's standing, you are bringing opprobrium upon the institution and inflicting damage upon a faculty member, whose work has earned him considerable praise from leading researchers in his field. The further manacling of Dr Rancourt for having the audacity to step onto the university campus and use some of its facilities is a sign of the authoritarian regime over which you preside.

As a specialist in university teaching and learning, having published multiple articles on the topic for more than twenty years, I have viewed several extracts from Dr Rancourt's classes currently available on You Tube. I am very impressed with the Socratic method which he uses to great effect. By raising questions in a dialectical manner and probing students' answers with further questions, Dr Rancourt shows a fine understanding of the intricacies of this

approach. The resulting dialogue which he establishes engages students in an active discussion of physics and the social implications of science. Surely, these are characteristics which are to be encouraged in any university which values critical and open thought, not punished for their creativity.

I would urge you to watch the videos on You Tube and encourage other faculty members to learn from Dr Rancourt's example.

I recently published a book on Canadian universities, titled *Selling Out: Academic Freedom and the Corporate Market* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2009), in which I recount several case studies of faculty members who have been punished for speaking out against the market model of education. When I next write about this problem, I shall make sure to include Dr Rancourt's case, which follows the same pattern as those in the book. .

For the sake of the reputation not only of the University of Ottawa, but of Canadian universities in general, reverse the decision to fire Dr Rancourt!

Yours truly,

Howard Woodhouse Ph.D. (Toronto),
Professor of Educational Foundations & Co-Director,
University of Saskatchewan Process Philosophy Research Unit.