



CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, LOCAL 3906  
Wentworth House, B108, McMaster University  
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L8S 4K1  
[www.cupe3906.org](http://www.cupe3906.org)

Allan Rock, President  
President's Office, Tabaret Hall  
University of Ottawa  
550 Cumberland Ave.  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

October 20, 2009

Re: Political dismissal of Professor Denis Rancourt

Mr. Allan Rock:

CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) Local 3906 is part of CUPE-national with 600,000 members across Canada and represents teacher assistants (TAs), research assistants (RAs), sessional lecturers (sessionals), and post-doctoral researchers at McMaster University, a major research-intensive university in Ontario. As such, Local 3906 is particularly attuned to the academic work environment and to the place of the university in our society.

CUPE Local 3906 believes that the academic freedom of all teaching and research university personnel, as defined in the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (supported and adopted by Canada), is a necessary condition for a free and democratic society in the modern world.

CUPE Local 3906 further believes that to deny the academic freedom of one teacher is to deny the principle of academic freedom.

CUPE Local 3906 protests your administration's firing of former physics professor and public intellectual Denis Rancourt in what is a prima facie case of removing a dissident professor recognized for his scientific research and celebrated for his advances in pedagogy and his social justice activism.

Full and tenured Professor Denis Rancourt was effectively and summarily fired on December 10, 2008, when your administration locked him and his students out of his laboratory, summarily and without notice or explanation fired his post-doctoral research associate of more than 12 years, locked him out of his office, removed him from all of his graduate students, and barred and trespassed him from campus – including his social justice weekly radio show and weekly documentary film and discussion series. You even had him arrested and hauled off in handcuffs by Ottawa Police when he participated in a public presentation about campus activism and student academic freedom.

All of this is in sharp contrast with a recent University of Ottawa promotional video that presents you as a champion of human rights.

CUPE Local 3906 sides with Denis Rancourt in his battle to rightfully recover his employment. We ask: Will you respect all eventual labour arbitration decisions in this case? Will

you respect the findings of the ongoing Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)  
Independent Committee of Inquiry into the matter?



Mary Ellen Campbell  
President, CUPE 3906  
On behalf of the CUPE Local 3906 Executive

Cc:  
Denis Rancourt  
Marc Jolicoeur, Chairman-BOG, University of Ottawa  
Nathalie Des Rosiers, General Counsel, CCLA  
CAUT  
APUO  
CUPE-Ontario  
FAIR (Federal Accountability Initiative for Reform)  
Democracy Watch