

Transcript No. 09-0229

G20 MK project  
Step-1

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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

IN THE MATTER OF DENIS RANCOURT

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MEETING HELD ON MARCH 9TH, 2009, AT 9:09 IN THE FORENOON

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APPEARANCES:

Denis Rancourt, professor, Department of Physics

Jean-Yves Leduc, University of Ottawa

Andre Lalonde, Dean

Mario Lamontagne, A.P.U.O

This meeting was monitored by Gillespie Reporting Services at  
Ottawa, Ontario, having been duly appointed for the purpose.

1 --UPON COMMENCING

2 MR. RANCOURT: So the first thing we wanted to  
3 discuss is the possibility that Claude and I -- et on peut  
4 le faire en français si vous préférez -- the possibility  
5 that Claude and I be here together for this joint  
6 grievance.

7 M. LEDUC: Non, on a prévu une réunion séparée  
8 pour M. Lamontagne.

9 M. RANCOURT: Nous, c'est l'employeur, parce que  
10 l'association n'a pas été informée de ça.

11 M. LEDUC: À ce que je sache, oui.

12 M. RANCOURT: Quand?

13 M. LEDUC: Ah, bien là, je le sais pas là. Vous  
14 me posez une question.

15 M. RANCOURT: Parce que vendredi, dans le milieu  
16 de l'après-midi, l'APUO m'a envoyé toutes les  
17 communications, ils m'ont bien dit que c'était toutes les  
18 communications qu'ils avaient eues avec l'employeur et il  
19 n'y avait aucune mention de ça.

20 M. LEDUC: Monsieur Rancourt, nous ne prévoyons  
21 pas entendre un grief collectif pour ça. Il y a deux  
22 griefs qui vont être entendus. Le doyen n'a pas de  
23 juridiction dans le travail de M. Lamontagne.

24 M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: Est-ce que je peux assister  
25 juste comme spectateur?

1 M. LEDUC: Non.

2 M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: Ou auditeur?

3 M. LEDUC: Non.

4 M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: Même pas?

5 M. LEDUC: Même pas.

6 M. RANCOURT: J'ai jamais entendu parler d'un  
7 grief collectif qui est entendu en deux parties. C'est  
8 pas quelque chose qui est prévue dans l'entente  
9 collective. Dans l'entente collective il est dit que pour  
10 des griefs collectifs on nomme un représentant et qu'il y  
11 a un *meeting* d'étape 1. En plus, je crois que  
12 l'association n'a jamais entendu parler de cette  
13 proposition. Je ne sais pas si tu veux confirmer. Toi,  
14 Mario, est-ce que tu en as entendu parler?

15 M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: La seule chose que je peux  
16 confirmer, c'est qu'un grief collectif, dans les  
17 procédures de la convention collective, c'est qu'il y a un  
18 représentant pour le grief collectif et il y a tout  
19 simplement une rencontre ---

20 M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: Il n'y aura pas de  
21 rencontre avec moi. C'est ça que ça veut dire?

22 M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Bien, j'ai l'impression  
23 qu'il n'y aura pas de rencontre.

24 M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Pas de rencontre avec moi.

25 M. RANCOURT: Je ne comprends pas comment il

1           faudrait tout ajuster les procédures à partir de l'étape 1  
2           pour prendre en compte qu'il y aurait eu deux étapes 1  
3           séparées. C'est quelque chose qui n'est pas du tout  
4           décrit ni prévu dans l'entente collective.

5                   M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Non, c'est pas dans la  
6           convention collective.

7                   M. RANCOURT: C'est très -- moi c'est la première  
8           fois que j'entends parler de cette position-là ou même de  
9           cette possibilité-là.

10                   M. LEDUC: Nous, sous toute réserve, on est prêt à  
11           entendre le grief avec M. Rancourt seulement. Si c'est  
12           pas le cas, on pourra se rencontrer dans un autre  
13           contexte.

14                   M. RANCOURT: Okay. Est-ce que vous seriez prêt à  
15           entendre les raisons pour lesquelles professeur Lamontagne  
16           voudrait être ici?

17                   M. LEDUC: Non.

18                   M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: C'est la guerre.

19                   M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Pas du tout. Moi je pensais  
20           qu'on était une grande famille.

21                   M. LEDUC: C'est une question de procédure.

22                   M. RANCOURT: On parle d'entendre les raisons, là.  
23           On ne parle pas d'accepter, on parle juste d'entendre les  
24           raisons.

25                   M. LEDUC: Je vous ai déjà répondu, M. Rancourt.

1 M. RANCOURT: André, est-ce que tu es d'accord  
2 avec ça?

3 M. LALONDE: Oui. Est-ce qu'on a besoin d'un  
4 moment ici pour en discuter? On vous laisse en caucus?

5 M. RANCOURT: Un moment. Ça te tentes-tu d'en  
6 discuter?

7 M. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Oui. C'est étrange, les  
8 deux rencontres.

9 M. CLAUDE LAMONTAGNE: Donc, on est hors?

10 M. LALONDE: Oui.

11 M. RANCOURT: Peut-être qu'on pourrait fermer la  
12 porte. We can go off the Record now, until they come  
13 back.

14 (OFF RECORD DISCUSSION)

15 MR. RANCOURT: We can go back on. So we've had a  
16 discussion and you made -- of course, we're going to agree  
17 because we want to have a meeting. So I will be the  
18 representative.

19 MR. LEDUC: Merci monsieur.

20 MR. RANCOURT: Okay, so I just want to -- because  
21 it's fresh in my mind and because Claude Lamontagne,  
22 professor Claude Lamontagne will not be at this meeting,  
23 he's the cogrievor, there's two of us. So the employer  
24 has insisted that the two of us be represented by one  
25 person and so that would be myself. I thought I would

1 start by just summarizing Claude's main comments and  
2 points about this grievance.

3 MR. LEDUC: Before we do that, I think it's  
4 important for the employer to let you know that we are  
5 hearing this today without prejudice and that we are  
6 agreeing to hold this meeting despite the fact that we  
7 consider the grievor to have no interest in the questions  
8 relating to a student's academic file and that we reserve  
9 the right to file preliminary objections regarding the  
10 recent "recevabilité".

11 MR. LALONDE: Receivability.

12 MR. LEDUC: C'est ça -- of the grievance at any  
13 time.

14 MR. RANCOURT: Yes. Could I just ask for a few  
15 clarifications about what you just said?

16 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm.

17 MR. RANCOURT: You are saying that on the Record.  
18 Why did you preface it with "without prejudice"?

19 MR. LEDUC: Because it is without prejudice.

20 MR. RANCOURT: All right, and ... I forget what  
21 I was going to ask for clarification. You are saying  
22 that ... Could you ---

23 MR. LEDUC: We don't feel that this grievance is  
24 relevant to a student's academic file.

25 MR. RANCOURT: "Relevant to a student's academic

1 file", what does that mean?

2 MR. LEDUC: Exactly what I said.

3 MR. RANCOURT: Okay.

4 MR. LEDUC: We don't consider this to be relevant  
5 to a student file. And this is about a student's file,  
6 it's not about a professor's file.

7 MR. RANCOURT: You are saying that you would  
8 reject the entire grievance because it is related somehow  
9 to a student file?

10 MR. LEDUC: It's about a student file.

11 MR. RANCOURT: The entire grievance?

12 MR. LEDUC: That's right.

13 MR. LALONDE: Before we start, there is something,  
14 Jean-Yves, that I wanted to ask. I wanted to ask  
15 professor Rancourt if he is taping this discussion today.

16 MR. RANCOURT: The taping question, which of  
17 course the employer has asked at the last three of these  
18 meetings that we've had in recent time since February 27th  
19 was the first in this series. And you, of course,  
20 Jean-Yves, was present for all of them, the Dean was  
21 present for all but one of them, the present Dean of  
22 today. And as you know, I've answered the same answer  
23 each time and I've also insisted that that will be the  
24 case every time that we have a court transcriber like this  
25 in such a meeting, that there is no reason for me to tape

1 independently. However, I mentioned last time that  
2 I would have, I see no reason to have an objection with  
3 individual taping, that I would not object to you  
4 individually taping. And I would ask that you clarify  
5 what is the problem with an individual recording.

6 MR. LALONDE: I am asking you to state, for the  
7 Record, if you are taping.

8 MR. RANCOURT: Yes. Could you just clarify that  
9 point though?

10 MR. LALONDE: No, I asked you a question.

11 MR. RANCOURT: Yes.

12 MR. LALONDE: I expect an answer.

13 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, I gave that answer. I said  
14 I will not.

15 MR. LALONDE: I want you to state it for the  
16 Record now.

17 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, I am not.

18 MR. LALONDE: Are you taping?

19 MR. RANCOURT: I am not taping.

20 MR. LALONDE: Could you state that you are not  
21 taping this discussion at the moment? That's what I want  
22 to hear.

23 MR. RANCOURT: Okay, I am not taping this  
24 discussion at the moment.

25 MR. LALONDE: Thank you.

1 MR. RANCOURT: But I don't understand why you --  
2 I already said this and it applies to -- for example, on  
3 March 17th ---

4 MR. LALONDE: Professor Rancourt, every time  
5 I will meet you, I will ask you this question.

6 MR. RANCOURT: Why?

7 MR. LEDUC: Because it's his right to do so.

8 MR. RANCOURT: I am telling you today that on  
9 March 17th there will be a court transcriber and I will  
10 not tape. Are you going to ask me again on March 17th?

11 MR. LALONDE: Yes, I will ask you on March 17th.

12 MR. RANCOURT: Why?

13 MR. LALONDE: I want to know.

14 MR. RANCOURT: If I'm telling you today? I'm  
15 telling you today. Why will you ask me again?

16 MR. LEDUC: Should we move on?

17 MR. RANCOURT: Because he can. Okay. So, as  
18 I was proposing, I would like to summarize the comments of  
19 Claude Lamontagne.

20 Claude expressed very strongly that he feels that,  
21 well, in his department -- and this is also true of my  
22 department, but in his department, in psychology, the  
23 practice with fourth-year-research-type courses is such  
24 that no colleague and no committee has any standing to  
25 judge the accessibility of a project before it's approved.

1 In other words, they don't do that. Tenured professors  
2 propose projects in psychology for this fourth-year  
3 research project and they are accepted a priori and they  
4 are done. There is no such procedure or accepted thing  
5 where the administration or a committee preapproves  
6 projects that professors propose. It's simply not in the  
7 culture, it's not in the practice, he's never heard of  
8 such a thing.

9 MR. LEDUC: How can this be relevant to the fact  
10 that there is a process in the Faculty of Science?

11 MR. RANCOURT: What process are you referring to?

12 MR. LEDUC: My understanding is that there is a  
13 committee in the Faculty of Science that reviews those.

14 MR. RANCOURT: No, that's not true.

15 MR. LALONDE: I disagree.

16 MR. RANCOURT: Okay, we will talk about that.

17 I would be interested to know what the Dean sees as the  
18 process. But that, there are two of us grieving the fact  
19 that we were denied the possibility of supervising a  
20 fourth-year project course. And the other professor, I'm  
21 just describing the feedback that he's given. Okay?

22 MR. LEDUC: And you can confirm that professor  
23 Lamontagne has a cross-appointment to science?

24 MR. RANCOURT: I didn't say that.

25 MR. LEDUC: So he basically would have no standing

1 at the Faculty of Science.

2 MR. RANCOURT: If he has no standing, then why do  
3 you want to meet him individually in a part-two step-one  
4 meeting to discuss this grievance?

5 MR. LEDUC: I asked a question, professor  
6 Rancourt. I did not ask you to ask me a question.

7 MR. RANCOURT: Well, I'm describing something here  
8 and I didn't ask you to ask me a question. I said that  
9 I would explain the position of professor Lamontagne.  
10 Okay? So if we could continue, I will do that.

11 MR. LEDUC: Now, I think it's important for you to  
12 understand that we consider everything you talk about as  
13 being Dr. Lamontagne's position as being hearsay because  
14 he's not here.

15 MR. RANCOURT: Well, I have a witness. We just  
16 discussed this in detail and Mario Lamontagne was present.

17 MR. LEDUC: You don't have to agree with me.

18 MR. RANCOURT: He can verify.

19 MR. LEDUC: All I am saying to you is we consider  
20 it to be hearsay.

21 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, but I just want to confirm.

22 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: I want to mention something  
23 to clarify.

24 MR. RANCOURT: Yes.

25 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: If this is a joint

1 collective or "grief collectif" and now you say that we  
2 need a representative, okay, professor Rancourt is the  
3 representative. Then he's bringing information that  
4 I believe and I know that he consulted with professor  
5 Lamontagne.

6 MR. LEDUC: He's ---

7 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Then, in this fact, if he's  
8 the representative of the group of two, he can bring  
9 points.

10 MR. LEDUC: Mario, there's a difference between  
11 stating a fact around circumstances and reporting someone  
12 else's comments. And this isn't -- it was not stated as a  
13 fact, it was reported as someone's comments.

14 MR. RANCOURT: Well, I'm stating as a fact that  
15 Claude Lamontagne is of the opinion that I am expressing  
16 here as his representative. Okay? It is a fact that  
17 these are the opinions expressed to me by professor Claude  
18 Lamontagne as his representative in this meeting. Do you  
19 accept that?

20 MR. LEDUC: No.

21 MR. RANCOURT: Sorry?

22 MR. LEDUC: No.

23 MR. RANCOURT: So you are saying that the  
24 representative ---

25 MR. LEDUC: Move on. I don't have to accept it.

1 Move on.

2 MR. RANCOURT: Comprends-tu quelque chose  
3 là-dedans?

4 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: I don't understand. He's  
5 the representative of this grievance.

6 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm.

7 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Do you accept that, that  
8 professor Rancourt ---

9 MR. LEDUC: Absolutely.

10 MR. MARIO LAMONTAGNE: Okay.

11 MR. LEDUC: But that doesn't mean I have to accept  
12 the comments as they are. I hear them, we take note of  
13 them.

14 MR. RANCOURT: We are not asking you to be aware  
15 of the rules in the Department of Psychology. We're not  
16 asking you to accept without verifying what is being said  
17 by professor Lamontagne through me as his representative.  
18 We are simply telling you what professor Lamontagne would  
19 have liked to express at this meeting. And since he  
20 cannot be here, he's asked me to express them. That's  
21 what I'm doing. That's all we're doing.

22 MR. LEDUC: Which you have characterized as his  
23 opinion.

24 MR. RANCOURT: No, I will -- as I stated just now,  
25 I'm trying to communicate as accurately as possible what

1 he would have said at this meeting.

2 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm.

3 MR. RANCOURT: Okay? Do you accept that?

4 MR. LEDUC: I hear you.

5 MR. RANCOURT: Do you accept that it's legitimate  
6 for the information to be transmitted in this way?

7 MR. LEDUC: That's how you choose to do it.

8 MR. RANCOURT: Well, it's what's foreseen in the  
9 collective agreement. You have a representative and then  
10 he represents the group. It's not what I'm choosing.  
11 It's what's foreseen in the collective agreement.

12 Okay, so I'll continue. So I think I stated the  
13 first point which, in professor Lamontagne's department  
14 and faculty, there, basically a professor proposes a  
15 project and there is no evaluation of its accessibility in  
16 any way. He's never seen that in his 30-year career.  
17 He's functioned this way all the way through and he's  
18 never heard of such a thing in his faculty. That's the  
19 first point.

20 In the second point, professor Lamontagne felt  
21 very strongly that his understanding of what is a DTPC,  
22 that is a Departmental Teaching Personnel Committee, that  
23 in his understanding of the rule and mandate of such a  
24 committee it would not be appropriate, it is not  
25 appropriate that the DTPC would judge an academic question

1 like this regarding an undergraduate course. In his  
2 opinion, that does not fit with his experience of the role  
3 and purpose of the DTPC, and in his department there would  
4 be a committee that is somewhat more appropriate, but  
5 would not be used for this. And there is an  
6 undergraduate, I believe, an undergraduate teaching  
7 committee of some sort in his department which he says  
8 that would be the committee that would be closest, but  
9 it's never used in this way to prejudge or judge a  
10 fourth-year-research-type project. And of course,  
11 fourth-year-research-type projects in undergraduate  
12 degrees are very common across the campus. So that was  
13 his opinion about simply the DTPC.

14 He used the word "aberrant", I don't know the  
15 translation in English right now, I can't think of it, but  
16 he basically felt it was highly anomalous that there would  
17 be any kind of process that would censor a research  
18 project at this specialization fourth-year level  
19 undergraduate-type process. So he felt it was highly  
20 anomalous, unacceptably anomalous, that's the word  
21 "aberrant" in French, whereby there would be censorship of  
22 a project like this.

23 He also wanted me to state that his expertise is  
24 highly relevant to this particular project. His PhD is  
25 from a faculty of science and engineering in the, from the

1 University of Edinburgh, which is a highly regarded  
2 University. And his expertise is about models,  
3 mathematical and computer models of cognition about how we  
4 learn, and so it's directly relevant to the theme of this  
5 project. And he feels very strongly that he is an ideal  
6 cosupervisor for a project of this type.

7 He also wanted me to express that he opposes very  
8 strongly the idea that you proposed at the beginning of  
9 this meeting, that we heard for the first time today, that  
10 to my knowledge the APUO has never heard before, the idea  
11 that the step-one meeting would be divided into two parts.  
12 Seeing each of the grievors of a collective grievance  
13 separately, he says he does not, we concur that he does  
14 not agree with this divide-and-conquer-type strategy to  
15 dealing with a step-one collective grievance.

16 So those are some of the main points that are  
17 fresh in my memory because professor Lamontagne just  
18 expressed them. There will be others that my memory will  
19 help me with as I review some of these other points and  
20 documents.

21 Now, I would like to start with the, just  
22 reviewing some of the very key documents directly related  
23 to this grievance and reviewing the grievance itself as  
24 the basis for a next part, a second part of our meeting  
25 where we may propose resolution possibilities. And the

1 first thing I want to say is that I think there have been  
2 many, many misunderstandings in this process regarding the  
3 fourth-year projects. And I want to say, for the Record,  
4 that I have never been able to sit down like this and talk  
5 with the Dean or my chairman or members of my department,  
6 the DTPC in particular. I mean, to talk about this  
7 project and the evaluation that the department was doing  
8 of the project or anything related to this, I've never had  
9 a chance to actually sit down and talk with people. The  
10 DTPC did not ask me to be heard at its meeting. The  
11 chairman did not ask to speak with me when he decided to  
12 make this review. The Dean did not ask to speak with me  
13 at any time while he was evaluating the reports from the  
14 DTCP and the chairman in making his own decision. So  
15 I have never really been heard by the decisional, the  
16 people who made the decision to deny this project at any  
17 time. This is the very first time and it has had to occur  
18 through this formal process of the collective agreement.

19 So that being said, I hope that you will stay and  
20 hear me with regards to this project.

21 So the first thing I would like to do is go  
22 through the text of the grievance itself and just ask for  
23 a few clarifications maybe.

24 The grievance is grievance G20. I've entitled it  
25 "Interference with PHY4006", which is the course code for

1 the fourth-year physics project course, "and  
2 deregistration of student Marc Kelly". That's just the  
3 title, but in fact when you look at the text of the  
4 grievance, it's a two page description, there are many  
5 items here, and I've got a point-form list of some of the  
6 items. And so I say the related incidents in this matter  
7 that constitute violation of the collective agreement  
8 include but are not limited to the following. And then  
9 I just want to bring out some of these points.

10 One is the refusal to include the PHY4006 course  
11 in my 2008-2009 workload. There was an explicit refusal  
12 for the Dean to include this course in my workload when my  
13 workload was being negotiated. This was before we knew  
14 that a student would register. So it's not related to  
15 registration of the student, it's related to an  
16 administrative decision with regards to my workload and  
17 I have a few documents here that relate to that.

18 In a letter dated, or an email rather, dated  
19 August 13th that I sent to Dean, in one of the points in  
20 this letter I say that I ask to be assigned the PHY4006  
21 fourth-year physics project supervision course. So I made  
22 that request very clearly as we were negotiating my course  
23 load for that academic year. And the Dean's answer is  
24 dated August 18th, and one of the salient features of this  
25 answer, the Dean says:

1 "Dealing specifically with your suggestion that  
2 you be assigned Physics 4006, physics project  
3 supervision course, apart from the concern noted  
4 above..."

5 Because the Dean has other concerns about assigning, in  
6 relation to assigning my course load, "I also have", the  
7 Dean says:

8 "I also have reservation regarding the content of  
9 the proposed course description which you have  
10 prepared."

11 So the Dean is personally, himself, commenting on the  
12 content of this physics research course. And he goes on  
13 to say, the Dean goes on to say that:

14 "While I have yet to receive the minutes from the  
15 meeting..."

16 He means the meeting of the DTPC whom he says has met  
17 about this course, while he has yet to receive the  
18 minutes, and then he says in parentheses:

19 "I will receive them within a few days according  
20 to the chair and you will receive a copy as well".

21 Close the parentheses.

22 "While I have yet to receive the minutes from this  
23 DTPC meeting, I support the decision of the DTPC  
24 regarding this matter."

25 So the Dean supports the DTPC's decision in denying or in

1 criticizing the content of a project course without even  
2 having seen the minutes of this that report on their  
3 reasons supposedly for cancelling the course.

4 And then at the end, in relation to this course, a  
5 little later on in the letter, the Dean says, he says:

6 "I would simply say that I concur with your  
7 colleague's decision".

8 He means the DTPC and the chair.

9 "I also do not find it appropriate as a six credit  
10 fourth year physics course aimed at testing  
11 students' capacity to apply three years of physics  
12 training in the undertaking of a significant  
13 scientific project".

14 So the Dean is making, personally here, a comment about  
15 the significance of the project, the content of the  
16 project and so on, not having seen the report from the  
17 DTPC.

18 So it shows, these documents show that the Dean is  
19 directly intervening in these academic questions related  
20 to a course. I think that those are grievable things that  
21 have little to do with a student's registration or  
22 deregistration from a course.

23 In another point here in the grievance, it says  
24 that I object to the use of the DTPC to judge the  
25 accessibility of the Physics 4006 project based only on

1 the project description and outside of any past or  
2 established practice or process. So I'm basically saying  
3 that I don't agree that the DTPC was used in this way.  
4 And on that note, I want to say that I've been in the  
5 Physics Department for 22 years. I've given probably, I'm  
6 one of the professors that's given, supervised more of  
7 these courses, research, fourth-year courses, than at  
8 least as many or more than most of my colleagues. Some  
9 years I've had as many as three or four at one time during  
10 the same academic year. So I have a wide experience in  
11 this, over 22 years, and I had never before these, this  
12 case and the previous case which had a similar project  
13 title, or I mean a title that was interdisciplinary and  
14 that was objected to at the time, never before these very  
15 recent cases have I seen any interference by colleagues or  
16 any questioning by the chairman or any process in place to  
17 examine projects. There has never -- or anytime was there  
18 ever before, the DTPC used in this way to give opinions.

19 So these projects, the way that they are run is  
20 that professors are asked to submit titles and professors  
21 submit titles. They can also submit short descriptions if  
22 they want, but it's not required. And the only reason  
23 that professors are asked to submit titles -- they don't  
24 have to -- is to inform potential students who might want  
25 to work with the professor.

1           So, for example, if the professor already knows  
2           that a student would like to work with him or her on a  
3           particular project, there's no need to submit a title  
4           because it's already settled. These titles are only meant  
5           to advertize to the students, and this has been the  
6           practice -- I know because I developed the practice, I was  
7           the professor who wrote the first set of rules in my  
8           department about the nature of these projects and the  
9           nature of the methods that can be used in these projects  
10          and so on, I elaborated the rules for the first time in  
11          the Physics Department and that became the basis of the  
12          present rules that is guidelines that we give to students  
13          and professors about the nature of these projects. So I'm  
14          well aware of these rules and I have never seen  
15          interference of this type.

16                 So the titles go to advertize to the students,  
17                 then the students tell the organiser what project they've  
18                 selected with which supervisor and they are given a  
19                 guideline of the rules and regulation. For example, you  
20                 cannot use your summer work, your paid summer work as part  
21                 of your project, et cetera. There's a number of rules  
22                 like that that are handed to the students.

23                 Now, the Dean has said that he disagrees, that  
24                 there is a procedure that is in place and has been in  
25                 place, which I am not aware of at all, that would allow

1 the administration to actually approve or disapprove one  
2 of these project course. Maybe the Dean could describe  
3 that process to me?

4 MR. LEDUC: Could you confirm for me, professor  
5 Rancourt, that in fact the course that you are grieving  
6 interference in was part of your workload?

7 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, we can talk about that. But  
8 I just -- I think it's ---

9 MR. LEDUC: That wasn't my question.

10 MR. RANCOURT: I think it is disrespectful when  
11 I ask a question to instead of answering it you ask  
12 another question and ask me to answer your question before  
13 I get an answer to mine. As you know, in these processes  
14 it is normal that I get to speak first and I've been doing  
15 that and you've allowed that. And now I've just asked a  
16 question to the Dean. And instead of letting the Dean  
17 answer, you have intervened with a question of your own  
18 which is unrelated to the question I'm asking. So I don't  
19 think that that is a good way to proceed.

20 So I would like to restate my question. Andre,  
21 you said earlier that there is a process in place that  
22 would allow me to evaluate, that would allow the  
23 administration to accept or not accept a proposed project  
24 by a professor. Could you describe that process to me?

25 MR. LALONDE: The process is in your department.

1 MR. RANCOURT: Could you describe that process to  
2 me?

3 MR. LALONDE: The process is in your department  
4 and you are telling us that you are the world expert on  
5 these rules and that you know them.

6 MR. RANCOURT: I don't think I used, "world  
7 expert".

8 MR. LALONDE: Well, you -- I've just been  
9 listening here very quietly for the last 20 minutes or so,  
10 and you've just told us that you know all of these rules,  
11 that you've supervised more of these students than anybody  
12 else, or just as many.

13 MR. RANCOURT: Yes.

14 MR. LALONDE: And that you are very well aware.  
15 Are you aware of how the Physics 4006 course is run? Are  
16 you aware of the committee that is set up and that is  
17 headed by professor Piercy.

18 MR. RANCOURT: There -- I -- no. There is no  
19 committee that is, has the mandate of preevaluating,  
20 refusing or rejecting courses that are proposed by  
21 professors. I think you are referring to, if I'm not  
22 mistaken, to a committee that is set up after the courses,  
23 the students are registered and the courses are picked.  
24 That committee is the committee that evaluates the  
25 projects, that comes up with a grade for the projects and

1 that ...

2 So, for example, professor Piercy will assign  
3 readers to the projects, the written projects, or there's  
4 also a poster presentation or an oral presentation and  
5 professors evaluate that. So those evaluators are  
6 assigned. I think you are referring to that process,  
7 which is an evaluation process of the project in order to  
8 give a grade to the student. I'm talking about a process  
9 that would allow the administration to deny the content of  
10 a proposed project by a professor. There's no such  
11 process like that. Do you agree with me that there's no  
12 such process like that?

13 MR. LALONDE: I don't know, but ---

14 MR. RANCOURT: You don't know?

15 MR. LALONDE: I have a fundamental problem sitting  
16 here and listening to all of this. You are grieving that  
17 we have interfered in this course, the topic of the  
18 course. You are essentially grieving that we have  
19 interfered in a course which was not assigned to your  
20 workload.

21 MR. RANCOURT: Well, that's a separate question.

22 MR. LALONDE: No, it's not.

23 MR. RANCOURT: I would be happy to deal with that  
24 question.

25 MR. LALONDE: It is a question of whether this

1 grievance is receivable or not.

2 MR. RANCOURT: Okay.

3 MR. LALONDE: You were not assigned Physics 4006  
4 at your workload. So why are we discussing this?

5 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. Let me put it this way.  
6 Could we first settle the question of whether or not  
7 there's a process ---

8 MR. LALONDE: This is nothing but a disguised  
9 fashion of getting to discuss again the grievance that you  
10 have with respect to your workload. You were never  
11 assigned Physics 4006.

12 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. Could we --

13 MR. LALONDE: Period.

14 MR. RANCOURT: Could we please ---

15 MR. LALONDE: What do you not understand about  
16 that?

17 MR. RANCOURT: Could we please ...

18 MR. LALONDE: It's logic.

19 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, and I will -- I would ---

20 MR. LALONDE: Okay?

21 MR. RANCOURT: I would be happy to address that.

22 MR. LALONDE: Now, as I scientist and a physicist,  
23 can you understand, this is a binary situation?

24 MR. RANCOURT: Yes.

25 MR. LALONDE: The answer is a zero or a one.

1 MR. RANCOURT: Okay.

2 MR. LALONDE: Okay? So were you assigned  
3 Physics 4006? The answer is no.

4 MR. RANCOURT: Actually --

5 MR. LALONDE: So how can we have interfered?

6 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. If you are going to ask me  
7 a question, then please allow me to answer instead of  
8 telling me what the answer is.

9 MR. LALONDE: Oh, I'm sorry for putting words in  
10 your mouth. You would never do that, professor Rancourt.  
11 Let the Record show that he has never done that.

12 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. I don't think sarcasm helps.

13 MR. LALONDE: No, it does not, neither if I would  
14 dance on the table, it wouldn't help.

15 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. Could we try to be a little  
16 bit more productive? If you have a question like the one  
17 you've just asked, I would be happy to try and answer it.  
18 Okay? But wouldn't it be better if we dealt with one  
19 question at a time instead of, in the middle of an answer,  
20 asking another question? Can we at least agree to that?

21 MR. LALONDE: I think that's ---

22 MR. RANCOURT: Can we agree to that?

23 MR. LEDUC: I think that essentially this is the  
24 heart of the matter.

25 MR. RANCOURT: It's a procedural ---

1 MR. LEDUC: No.

2 MR. RANCOURT: It's a procedural point.

3 MR. LEDUC: Yes, so is the question that we are  
4 raising, it's at the heart of the matter. If you were  
5 never assigned the course, therefore you are grieving  
6 something which you were never assigned, so you are  
7 grieving the principle and not the course itself.

8 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. How about this. Even though  
9 you have interrupted me in my questions and in my  
10 presentation and you want to go to your question at this  
11 time and you feel that it's more important and that we  
12 should address that ...

13 MR. LEDUC: You're very good at putting people,  
14 words in other people's mouth, aren't you?

15 MR. RANCOURT: Thank you. Even though you've  
16 interrupted me in that way, I'd be happy to go to your  
17 central question, as you've just put it, and address that  
18 question, if that's what you want to do.

19 So your question is: was this or was this not part  
20 of my workload? And I want to point out, with regards to  
21 that question, that nowhere in this process, and I brought  
22 most of the documentation here with me, has the Dean ever  
23 said that. Has the Dean ever responded in this discussion  
24 about this project by saying, "wait a minute, it's not in  
25 your course load, this is, you know, we don't have to

1 discuss it because it's not in your course load"?

2 MR. LALONDE: Well, I'm ---

3 MR. RANCOURT: At no time has the Dean said that.

4 MR. LALONDE: I'm telling you now.

5 MR. RANCOURT: In fact ... Yes, but ---

6 MR. LALONDE: It goes without saying.

7 MR. RANCOURT: Yes. Can I ---

8 MR. LALONDE: You never got a course load. What  
9 more can you want?

10 MR. RANCOURT: Can I answer? Okay? I'm in the  
11 process of answering. In fact, I would like to draw your  
12 attention to a document where I address that question  
13 specifically, if I can find it here.

14 Yes. On the 2nd of October, so we are well in --  
15 I sent an email to the Dean in c.c., many people in c.c.,  
16 to the Chairman of Physics, and I said in that email  
17 communication, you know -- and you have to understand,  
18 we're in the middle of this discussion here, this is the  
19 beginning of the semester, but we're into October already  
20 and we're discussing this question about the course and so  
21 on, we've had several exchanges already and so on. The  
22 Dean has been in c.c. to all these exchanges, and in this  
23 email I say:

24 "Since the Dean has been in c.c. and he has not  
25 forbidden me to supervise Marc's project, I will

1 do so. Recall that...

2 And then I add:

3 "Recall that it is departmental practice to add a  
4 professor's actual PHY4006 contributions to the  
5 professor's following year's teaching load".

6 Okay? So that is the established practice in the  
7 department. Professors are assigned teaching loads and,  
8 I mean, all, in addition to being assigned teaching loads  
9 for regular classes, professors propose these research  
10 projects. Professors are never refused these research  
11 projects. Professors take on students. And then, in the  
12 following year, that work that they did is acknowledged in  
13 their workload of the following year. That is the  
14 practice administratively in the department.

15 So I find your last-minute objection at the  
16 step-one meeting, after all this is over, the very first  
17 time the Dean says, "but it wasn't part of your workload",  
18 and we've had this exchange that I've just related, and it  
19 never came up before, I find it somewhat disingenuous.  
20 I don't understand why you didn't intervene before if that  
21 was your position, especially given this practice. So you  
22 see, it's not a binary question.

23 MR. LALONDE: It's your way of seeing it.

24 I disagree with you.

25 MR. RANCOURT: Okay, that's good. So now I have

1 accommodated you by answering your interjection and now I  
2 would like to continue with my questions and my  
3 presentation.

4 MR. LEDUC: Just be aware that we already told  
5 Mario that the meeting has to stop at 10:15.

6 MR. RANCOURT: That's in three or four minutes.

7 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm.

8 MR. RANCOURT: Yes. Well, then we will have to  
9 schedule more time, because I think these are important  
10 questions. You've actually stated that you have made your  
11 objections even about jurisdiction of this grievance. So  
12 I think that we need to have more time to clarify these  
13 points. You have brought things on the table today that  
14 are completely new, completely new positions that I've  
15 never heard before. So in a situation like that, I think  
16 we need more time. Would you agree that we continue this  
17 step-one discussion?

18 MR. LEDUC: We will -- I will consult the Dean  
19 about it and we will let you know within five days.

20 MR. RANCOURT: You will let me know within five  
21 days --

22 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm.

23 MR. RANCOURT: -- whether or not you agree to  
24 continue the step one?

25 MR. LEDUC: Hm-hmm. We may just decide that we

1 don't think that there's an area of agreement.

2 MR. RANCOURT: Yes, but I think it would, just to  
3 give my opinion about this, I would urge you to continue  
4 because we haven't expressed all of our views. So you  
5 cannot decide if there is an area of agreement until  
6 I think fairly you've, I've had a chance to express my  
7 views and ask my questions in the hope of clarifying, in  
8 the hope that we can see a possibility of agreement.  
9 I think that that is the purpose of these meetings. And  
10 I would like it to, I would like the meeting to be used  
11 this way. I think that's what's consistent with the,  
12 what's foreseen in the collective agreement.

13 So I would urge you to not -- I mean simply  
14 stating that we will not continue is effectively  
15 equivalent to walking out, I think.

16 MR. LEDUC: You are entitled to your opinion.

17 MR. RANCOURT: Okay, thank you. So I will try to  
18 go in the few minutes that are left to one of the more  
19 important points here. I'm trying to pick the most  
20 important points since we only have a few minutes left.

21 I think maybe I could go to the DTPC report about  
22 the project. And this is dated Monday, August 11th, 2008.  
23 The meeting began at 11:00 AM. Present were professors  
24 Bao, Harden, Longtin and the chair Béla Joós. And in this  
25 meeting, so what the DTPC did is they took the project and

1 evaluated it based only on the title and the description  
2 that I had provided.

3 Now, as I said earlier, the only purpose of the  
4 title and description is to announce to potential students  
5 that this project is available and that professor Rancourt  
6 is willing to supervise it. Never have these titles and  
7 projects descriptions been used to evaluate the content or  
8 the quality or the suitability of these projects. Never  
9 in, you know, in my 22 years, except the last two times  
10 when it was done because of my interdisciplinary projects.  
11 So there ---

12 MR. LALONDE: Are you stating that the title and  
13 description do not accurately display what the project was  
14 about?

15 MR. RANCOURT: No, I'm not stating that. I'm  
16 stating that ---

17 MR. LALONDE: So, just for the Record, you're  
18 stating that the title and the description accurately  
19 represent what this project was all about?

20 MR. RANCOURT: No, I'm not stating that. You're  
21 trying to map it onto a binary thing. It's not. What I'm  
22 stating is that this title and description relate to our,  
23 what is used to inform students that a project is  
24 available, to invite them to come and talk to the  
25 professor about what the project is about in detail, what

1 they would do with the student, what methods they would  
2 use, et cetera; to invite the students to come to the  
3 professor's office to tell them ... So it's intended to  
4 interest the student in the project. In other words, tell  
5 them the theme of the project, tell them the area. That's  
6 what it's intended to do.

7 MR. LEDUC: So we will have to leave it at that  
8 for today.

9 MR. RANCOURT: Okay. I look forward to your  
10 answer. Can we say by the end of the week, since it's  
11 Monday?

12 MR. LEDUC: Five days. Okay? Thank you.

13 MR. RANCOURT: Thank you.

14 MR. LEDUC: Merci.

15 --THIS MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:15 AM,  
16 ON MARCH 9TH, 2009.

17  
18 WE HEREBY CERTIFY THAT the foregoing was monitored  
19 and transcribed therefrom to the best of our skill  
20 and ability.

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G R S / J. Lartigau

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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

IN THE MATTER OF DENIS RANCOURT

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MEETING HELD ON MARCH 9TH, 2009, AT 9:09 IN THE FORENOON

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APPEARANCES:

Denis Rancourt, professor, Department of Physics

Jean-Yves Leduc, University of Ottawa

Andre Lalonde, Dean

Mario Lamontagne, A.P.U.O

This meeting was monitored by Gillespie Reporting Services at  
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