



Canadian Association of University Teachers
Association canadienne des professeures et professeurs d'université

BY EMAIL: info@mcft.ca

July 5, 2019

Tim Marshall
Executive Director
Maritime College of Forest Technology
1350 Regent Street
Fredericton New Brunswick
E3C 2G6

Dear Mr. Marshall:

On behalf of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), representing 77,000 academic and general staff at universities and colleges across the country, I am writing to express our grave concerns about the recent dismissals of Rod Cumberland and Gerald Redmond from the Maritime College of Forest Technology.

Rod Cumberland, a well-known wildlife biologist, was fired from his teaching post on June 20. On July 3, Gerald Redmond publicly stated that the College's dismissal of Mr. Cumberland was likely in retaliation for his outspoken criticism of the herbicide glyphosate. Mr. Redmond also stated that he "felt pressure from the board of governors in several instances, to try to sanction Rod for his outspokenness on the glyphosate herbicide." The next day, on July 4, the College informed Mr. Redmond that his services were no longer needed.

It is widely accepted that Canada's universities and colleges serve the common good by preserving, disseminating and advancing knowledge through the fostering of independent thinking and expression. These ends cannot be achieved without academic freedom. All academic staff members have the right to fulfil their functions without reprisal or suppression by the institution, the state, or any other source. Universities and colleges have a positive obligation to defend the academic freedom rights of members.

The dismissals of Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Redmond strongly suggest that the MCFT has violated their academic freedom and their basic right to due process. While the College disputes the reasons for Mr. Cumberland's dismissal, the charges against him are questionable. It strains believability that Mr. Redmond's termination, coming less than 24 hours after his public allegations against the College, was anything but retaliation for his views.

I note that the MCFT has articulation agreements with the University of New Brunswick, the University of Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton University. I have copied the presidents of these institutions and will be urging them, until the matter is successfully resolved, to reconsider these agreements in light of the serious academic freedom concerns arising at MCFT.

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I will also be referring this matter to the CAUT Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee meeting next month at which point further actions may be taken consistent with our procedures in investigating academic freedom violations. In the meantime, I urge you to take all the necessary steps to resolve this matter as quickly as possible. It is in everyone's interest to preserve and uphold the principle of academic freedom.

Sincerely,



David Robinson
Executive Director

/mmp

cc: Paul Mazerolle, President, University of New Brunswick
Vlad Tasic, President, Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers
Alaa Abd-El-Aziz, President, University of Prince Edward Island
Sharon Myers, President, University of Prince Edward Island Faculty Association
David Dingwall, President, Cape Breton University
Calvin Howley, President, Cape Breton University Faculty Association
Brenda Austin-Smith, President, CAUT
Alison Hearn, Chair, CAUT Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee
Jean Sauvageau, President, Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations