

Press Advisory

Notice of Events

The High Cost of Taking on the Corporate University

Radical anarchist physics professor Denis Rancourt stands for activist learning and a democratic academy.

On April 21st and 22nd, internationally recognized and controversial professor-activist Denis Rancourt will be giving a series of talks on academic freedom and radical learning in Winnipeg. Dr. Rancourt was recently dismissed from his position at the University of Ottawa, despite having tenure, to the dismay of academics and faculty unions across North America. He will discuss the events surrounding his battle with the University of Ottawa, the need to democratize universities, as well as his highly controversial positions on global climate change and the role of violence in activism. He will speak and teach at two larger events and two smaller workshops over the two-day period.

Background:

Denis Rancourt is a professor at the university of Ottawa and is well known for his innovative teaching, widely published research, and activism. He was recently dismissed from his position at the University of Ottawa, a very rare occurrence when a professor has tenure. Over the last 10 years, Rancourt has taught a course formally known as, "Physics and the Environment." Although his course has regularly won praise from students, the university administration took action when Rancourt changed the nature and focus of the course. It was outraged by the lack of conventional grading, the student control over topics, open attendance and the new name, "Activism Course: Understanding Power and its Contexts." At a recent lecture he gave at the University of Guelph, Rancourt said "I will advance that only the student can



liberate herself from the shackles of grades and imposed dogma, that only the student can make a sane university, that rebellion is an essential ingredient in self-discovery, and that self-discovery is the basis of all learning." Over the last two years, his university administration has shut down the course twice and most recently Dr. Rancourt was escorted off the campus in handcuffs. The university has been widely condemned for its oppressive tactics and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has begun an independent enquiry into the matter. As Jim Turk, Executive Director of the CAUT indicates: "Here's a tenured, full professor, one of the most respected physicists and active researchers at his university, who's being told he's not allowed to teach."

The details of Dr. Rancourt's case can be found at: www.academicfreedom.ca

Event Details:

This event will be hosted by: the University of Manitoba Graduate Students Association as well as the "Shaking The Tree: Activism, Change & the Environment" course also based at the U. of Manitoba (<http://mbactivism.wordpress.com>). *All events are free and open to the public.*

- April 21 – High Cost and Benefit of Taking on the Corporate University – U. of Manitoba at noon (GSA Lounge, University Centre)
- April 21 – Critical Pedagogy: Universities that Train but Fail to Educate – Mondragon Café and Bookstore at 7 pm (91 Albert St, Main Floor)
- April 22 – Global Warming: Truth or Dare – U. of Manitoba at 10 am (218 Wallace Bldg)
- April 22 – Risk Avoidance Pathology in First World Activism – Rudolf Rucker Center at 2 pm (91 Albert St, 3rd Floor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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