

November 9, 2015

Beverlee J. McClure
President
Adams State University
208 Edgemont Boulevard
Alamos, Colorado 81102

Dear President McClure:

We are the Presidents of the Colorado Conference of the American Association of University Professors and we are writing you about your university's treatment of Danny Ledonne. While we recognize that Mr. Ledonne is a former faculty member there, we believe that your school's actions with respect to him affect the conditions under which current faculty can exercise their academic freedom.

As you know, Mr. Ledonne recently received a notice from the university's chief of police, signed by you, barring him from campus. That order mentioned alleged behavior, but did not specify what that behavior was. We have since learned from Mr. Ledonne that this communication was sent as part of a hastily adopted "persona non grata" policy, passed into effect shortly before you sent him that letter.

We have a number of concerns about these actions. First, we find it remarkable that any campus would need a "persona non grata" policy. Existing laws are more than sufficient to deal with anybody engaging in disruptive behavior and disorderly conduct. The fact that your letter did not even bother to suggest what disruptive behavior Mr. Ledonne engaged in strongly suggests that whatever it was would not have met the standards requiring prosecution under existing law.

Second, we are deeply concerned that Mr. Ledonne's due process rights as a former professor and a citizen have been grossly violated. It is a basic right of citizenship that you should be informed of the charges against you. Not only that, by barring him from campus, you have sanctioned him without a hearing. Yes, he has the right to appeal this sanction to Denver, but we agree with Mr. Ledonne's statement in *Westword* that it is impossible to adequately appeal that sanction without understanding why the sanction arose in the first place.

Lastly, and most importantly from our point of view, we believe that your alarming treatment of Mr. Ledonne and the persona non grata policy that enabled that treatment will have a chilling effect on the free speech rights and academic freedom of current faculty members. Universities and other institutions of higher learning carry a greater responsibility for safeguarding the principles and practices that sustain freedom of speech and scholarly inquiry than practically any other organization in a democratic society. Discharging this fundamental responsibility requires a very highly level of toleration for verbal, written, and representational expression as well as respect for due process, even under circumstances that may otherwise seem disturbing to some students, faculty, and administrators. Why would any faculty member feel safe in engaging in any form of protected speech when they know that they could be immediately barred from

campus (in essence, forced to abandon their professional duties) without a hearing or even forewarning?

In fact, we believe the very existence of a persona non grata policy is antithetical to the core principles of academic freedom and shared governance that sustain American public colleges and universities. The fact that you chose to apply it to a former faculty member first only reinforces that impression. We believe that this practice not only runs counter to the practice of good university governance. We think it's fundamentally un-American.

As representatives of the organization that has created and developed the ideas of academic freedom and shared governance over the last hundred years, we are willing to work with you to create campus policies that are more respectful of these principles. Should you choose to ignore our offer, our next step will be to inform possibly concerned Adams State faculty members about your decision and to pass what we have learned about Mr. Ledonne's treatment on to higher ranking officers of the AAUP to see if they think this deserves further investigation.

We look forward to reading your response to this letter,



Stephen Mumme
Co-President, AAUP Colorado Conference
Professor of Political Science Colorado State University – Fort Collins



Jonathan Rees
Co-President, AAUP Colorado Conference
Professor of History
Colorado State University - Pueblo