

December 01, 2020

Honorable Jason Kenney, MLA, Premier of the Province of Alberta  
307 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Kenney,

The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA), representing 7000 academic staff members, is deeply concerned about the continuing attacks on Alberta's academics coming from your government. The latest incidents are attacks on Dr. Ubaka Ogbogu by your staffers.

The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations stands in support of our academic colleagues and their rights to academic freedom and public critique. The current Government of Alberta continues to disparage these academic rights and responsibilities when there is disagreement with UCP policies. Academics are supposed to investigate and challenge the political leadership of the day, in order to enlighten and inform citizens, as well as enrich public debate. Alberta academics should not be expected to remain mute and uncritical, nor fall in lock step with the provincial government when we are supposed to be living in a free and democratic society – oppression like that occurs under authoritarian regimes.

We strongly object to attacks by your staffers to disparage and discredit Dr. Ogbogu the individual, as an apparent justification to dismiss his commentary and arguments. Alberta society must expect far better from the government and your staffers. Exercising academic freedom, Dr. Ogbogu had every right to make the statements he did, and if government disagrees, for its representatives to articulate arguments, not personal attacks in response.

We utterly deplore subsequent racist and xenophobic speech that was leveled against Dr. Ogbogu from members of the public. We all have a responsibility to support and encourage open and healthy political debate, including by the government. We need to foster an environment where there is no place for bigoted assaults on Alberta citizens.

The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations calls for you to publicly apologize to Dr. Ubaka Ogbogu for your staffers' remarks.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kevin Kane  
President CAFA