



## *Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship*

### **Board of Directors**

Mark Mercer, PhD (Saint Mary's)  
President  
president@safs.ca

Janice Fiamengo, PhD (UBC)  
Janice.fiamengo@uottawa.ca

Tom Flanagan, PhD, FRSC (Calgary)  
tflanaga@ucalgary.ca

Andrew Irvine, Ph.D. (UBC)  
andrew.irvine@ubc.ca

Steve Lupker, PhD (UWO)  
lupker@uwo.ca

John Mueller, PhD (Calgary)  
mueller@ucalgary.ca

Clive Seligman, PhD (UWO)  
seligman@uwo.ca

Peter Suedfeld, PhD FRSC (UBC)  
psuedfeld@psych.ubc.ca

### **Past Presidents**

Clive Seligman, PhD (UWO)

Doreen Kimura, PhD FRSC (SFU)

John J. Furedy, PhD (Toronto)

6 October 2016

Michael J. Mahon, PhD  
President, University of Lethbridge  
4401 University Drive  
Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4

Dear Dr Mahon,

I am writing as president of the Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship (SAFS), a national organization of university faculty members and others dedicated to the defense of academic freedom and reasoned and respectful debate. (For further information, please see our website at [www.safs.ca](http://www.safs.ca).)

According to a report today by the CBC (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/tony-hall-suspended-lethbridge-1.3793294>), Professor Anthony Hall has been suspended from teaching and prohibited from entering your university's campus. The report states that the University of Lethbridge is investigating Dr Hall for possible violations of the Human Rights Act.

Suspending a professor is, as you know, an extreme form of discipline. It is difficult to see what in this case would warrant it. Dr Hall is not alleged to be an incompetent or fraudulent researcher, nor an incompetent or abusive teacher. So far as the information that has been made public goes, he has been suspended for having and expressing views with which administrators disagree. Now even if administrators find his expressed views repugnant, academic freedom protects his rights to have them and to express them publicly.

In light of these considerations, SAFS would like to ask you how Dr Hall's suspension is not a violation of his academic freedom and how his suspension will not tend to create a chilly climate for expression on campus.

SAFS looks forward to hearing from you. We will post this letter on our website. With your permission, we will be pleased to post your reply together with it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Mercer', written in a cursive style.

Mark Mercer, PhD  
President, Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship (SAFS)  
PO Box 33056 Quinpool Centre  
Halifax, NS B3L 4T6  
[president@safs.ca](mailto:president@safs.ca)  
<http://www.safs.ca/>

Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy  
Saint Mary's University  
923 Robie Street  
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3  
[mark.mercer@smu.ca](mailto:mark.mercer@smu.ca)  
<http://professormarkmercerc.ca/>  
<http://www.smu.ca/academics/departments/philosophy-faculty-and-staff.html>

Cc: Kurt E. Schlachter, Chair, Board of Governors