

BC Professors call for Suspension of Lansbridge University Operations - October 4, 2006

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BC's University Professors Call for Immediate Suspension of Lansbridge University Operations

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VANCOUVER

-- The organization representing BC's public university professors today called for an immediate suspension of operations by Lansbridge University in response to reports that Lansbridge's owner, Dr. Michael Lo, appears to have offered degree programs illegally at another BC school he owns, Kingston College.

"The Vancouver Sun reported today that Dr. Lo's Kingston College had offered degree programs in British Columbia in partnership with American University of London since before 2001," said Robert Clift, Executive Director of the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of (CUFA/BC). "He was apparently directed twice, once in 2001 and again in 2004, to stop offering these degree programs, but he did not do so, thereby violating the Degree Authorization Act."

The Degree

Authorization Act, which became law in May 2002, requires anybody who wishes to offer a degree program or call themselves a university in British Columbia to go through a quality assessment process and receive permission from the Minister of Advanced Education.

"In June 2005, Dr. Lo was given permission to operate Lansbridge University and to offer degree programs in BC despite the fact that his Kingston College apparently had been illegally offering degree programs and had apparently been told to desist," Clift said. "If this is true, it points to either a massive failure

of the quality assessment process, or manipulation of that process. The Degree Authorization Act is supposed to protect students from unscrupulous operators."

The university professors' group wants the Minister of Advanced Education to suspend Lansbridge University's operating permissions until such time that the investigation of the Kingston College matter is completed. It also wants a separate investigation of the approval process for Lansbridge University in light of today's revelations.

"Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell has a responsibility to protect the public from shady degree granting institutions," Clift said. "Until such time that this matter is cleared up, Minister Coell must suspend Lansbridge University's permissions to operate in BC. Not to do so in this case would completely undermine public confidence in his government's quality assessment process."

Representing 4,200 university professors, instructors, academic librarians and other academic staff at SFU (Burnaby, Vancouver and Surrey campuses), UBC (Vancouver and Kelowna campuses), UNBC, UVic and Royal Roads University, CUFA/BC monitors BC's post-secondary education policy, conducts research, and provides advice to government on how they can improve post-secondary learning and research.