

OPEN LETTER TO DR. LINDA WILD FROM IOWA FACULTY EXPRESSING  
CONCERN ABOUT ACADEMIC FREEDOM AT SOUTHWESTERN  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

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Dear Dr. Wild,

As faculty members of institutions of higher learning in Iowa, we are distressed to hear the reports of the dismissal of Mr. Steve Bitterman from Southwestern Community College.

If he was fired because he expressed views that offended the religious sensibilities of some of his students, as he claims, this raises concerns among the faculty about the violation of Mr. Bitterman's academic freedom.

If he was fired because of student complaints about classroom interactions with students, this raises concerns among faculty regarding due process. Dismissal because of student complaints about teaching style seems unusually harsh and we question whether this was the only recourse available.

According to his own version, he was dismissed by you over the phone, and without any preceding meeting to see if issues related to his teaching could be resolved. Adjunct faculty are especially vulnerable in this regard, and we are especially concerned that colleagues holding these positions are treated in a fair manner.

Regarding the first, academic freedom concern, we request a clarification on the following points:

-Does expressing the view that certain events and phenomena related in the Bible are unhistorical or mythical constitute a cause for dismissal at your institution?

-Is it the position of your institution that the scientific theory of evolution, which may offend the beliefs of Christians, Jews, and Muslims who interpret Genesis 1-2 literally, should be taught at

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