

STATEMENT AT 8/21/2018 UA TOWN HALL

I speak today as a Tucson community member who is gravely concerned about the future of our universities, this one included.

Universities should be a sanctuary from the power of money and money-driven thinking. Instead, RCM, today's topic, is part of an ongoing monetization and marketization of human life. It sets departments against each other, encouraging teaching to the turnout. Rather than restoring power to the faculty, acting collectively, it keeps power in the hands of the administration—i.e., deans. And there are other defects I cannot go into now.

Meanwhile, financial support for our public universities continues to spiral downward, placing more and more of the fiscal burden on students' backs, and public hostility to our universities grows.

In this context, RCM is a case of rearranging the deck chairs. Scientists have begun to speak out against the growing anti-science feeling in our society. I believe that our public universities need to reach out to the communities surrounding them, listen to their concerns, and actively seek their support against the defunding of higher education. K-through-12 teachers finally rose up this spring in the Red for Ed movement – where are our university faculty members? Where are the town halls at which the university and the community can talk to each other and build political power?

Finally, given this context, it is absurd for this university to harbor an entity engendered and supported by hyper-wealthy forces that seek the destruction of public services, including public education at ALL levels. There is plenty of anger in the community about the tendentious high-school course and shoddy textbook that this entity promotes. Anger, too, that this entity is now the state legislature's pet, receiving millions in taxpayer money every year and banking most of it, while spawning a new, unneeded department and leaving other units of the university to go begging. This is "entrepreneurship" at its most perverse, violating even RCM, and it is bad for the university and for its standing in the community. How long will you tolerate this situation?

The entity of which I speak is the Center for the Philosophy of Freedom and its avatar, the Department of Political Economy and Moral Science.

Thank you for listening.

----- Patrick Diehl, concerned Tucson community member (patrickdiehl10@yahoo.com)