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Ytzen Lont
@ytzen

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Maarten Boudry
@mboudry



Post vertalen

Here is the full letter from Ghent University suspending @nathancofnas. As you can see, it's one long heckler's veto: the decision is not so much about Cofnas' actual violations as about the flood of complaints and protests the rector has received, the reputational damage to the university, the cancellations by certain speakers, the possible boycott against UGent due to Cofnas' appointment, etc.

The letter holds Cofnas accountable for all the "tension and unrest" his presence has caused (even though he never even shows up on campus), and for the "severe psychological distress" among students and the "negative impact on the well-being" of colleagues.

Since the rector is transgender, here's an analogy she might appreciate: this suspension is like banning a Pride event in a city because of the "unrest and tension" (read: anti-LGBT violence) the organizers are "causing" among religious fanatics. Or excluding trans women from political positions because of the "psychological distress" they may cause to people who believe in a sex binary.

It's even worse than a conventional heckler's veto, because I know that the rector has actively encouraged the "hecklers" to flood her with complaints, thereby giving the university a stick to beat the dog with.

Shockingly, the letter documents that Cofnas has called Jason Arday a "worthless scholar." Someone fire that miscreant, please! Never mind that "mentally disabled" is pretty much how Arday described himself—being functionally illiterate, reading only one page per hour, etc. Describing Cofnas' exposure of serious fraud and plagiarism as a "targeted campaign of professional elimination" is just completely deluded, and buying into the far-left narrative hook, line and sinker.

Once again, none of this is to imply that I agree with Cofnas' views on race, his calls for a "hereditarian revolution," his statements about Arday, or anything else.

This is purely about academic freedom, something the rector understands absolutely nothing about. Right after taking office, she declared that academics questioning the "genocide" in Gaza or the safety of vaccines would no longer be protected by academic freedom: "This is a line that cannot be crossed." (She was specifically targeting me at the time, when I still worked for UGent.)

And that's not even mentioning the fact that the rector used AI-hallucinated quotations in her inaugural speech and then covered it up and lied about it—which has nothing to do with ideology, just sheer incompetence and dishonesty.

I'm almost inclined to call her a "worthless scholar." But as Einstein probably never said at the Sorbonne in 1929: "Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe."

Concerning: Initiation of the disciplinary procedure and decision regarding preventive suspension in the interest of the service (Disciplinary Regulations for Staff)

Dear Nathan COFNAS,

Zoeken

Relevante

Maarte
@mbou
Writer.
maarte
me: bu
Upcom
Enlight

Live op X

Al Jazeera E
LIVE: Al JAZE

Wat er gel

Trending in Ned
Friesland

Trending in Ned
#StopExecuti

Trending in Ned
'Lucky'

Trending in Ned
Terug

Meer weergev

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Over the past months, I have received several complaints, reports, and concerning signals from across the wider university community regarding your conduct and public actions. In particular, over the past week additional concerns have been raised in relation to various interviews published in which you participated and the statements you made during those interviews.

In this regard I have decided to initiate a preliminary investigation as provided for in article 28 of the regulations with respect to disciplinary proceedings, the imposing of disciplinary measures, the preventive suspension in the interest of the service, and the taking of measures to ensure orderly conduct for staff members of Ghent University (hereinafter: "Disciplinary Regulations for Staff"). You can find the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff in the Codex of Ghent University via the following link: REG000237EN.

Article 3 of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff stipulates that any staff member may be subject to a disciplinary procedure in the event of:

(i) Offences that are committed in the university context. These concern either a serious breach of official/ professional duties (breach of a legal or a deontological duty as an officer), or an offence committed in the course of the performance of their duties/ the activities of Ghent University, such as (but not limited to), a breach of the internal regulations included in the Codex of Ghent University.

(ii) Offences committed in the context of private life, in so far as they are, on the one hand, criminally punishable and, on the other hand, have a negative impact on the functioning of the staff member or on the functioning of the service or have a serious negative impact on the well-being of or cooperation with other staff members or students.

(i) Offences committed within the university context

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work on 'race realism' and the 'hereditarian revolution' at Ghent University. These public claims, and the activities you describe, are fundamentally inconsistent with the contractual scope of your employment and constitute a manifest violation of your professional obligations towards this University.

Your employment contract (article 1) and the vacancy for which you were recruited (ref. LW01) define your research mandate as a study of 'the future of liberalism', specifically focusing on liberalism as a political doctrine emphasizing individual freedom and equality. The projects you publicly and repeatedly associate with your affiliation at Ghent University, most notably your 'Guide for the Hereditarian Revolution' which advocates for racial barriers and segregation, fall entirely outside the scope of your official research mandate.

Pursuant to article 4 of the Ghent University Work Regulations (Arbeidsreglement), employees are required to perform the work for which they were recruited and to execute their function in a loyal, careful, and upright manner. By publicly claiming to use your position and affiliation at Ghent University to advance research that is unrelated to your appointment, you are in breach of your professional duties and the loyalty required, as defined in article 3 §1 of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff.

Moreover, pursuant to article 1.3 of the Ghent University Code of Ethics, employees must ensure that any accumulation of activities does not entail a (perceived) conflict of interest or conflict with other standards established in the Code. Even if your work on 'race realism' were to be characterized as a private activity, its public association with your UGent





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affiliation creates a severe perceived conflict of interest and violates article 1.5 of the Code, which prohibits spreading ideas of racial superiority or inciting racial segregation.

The gravity of these cumulative breaches, involving deliberate public misrepresentation and the misuse of the University's reputation to promote ideologies that conflict with its core values, as well as your decision to continue your research into 'hereditary evolution' and 'racial realism' at Ghent University, contrary to the terms of your employment, concern a breach of your ethical duties as a member of staff at our University and therefore qualify as a disciplinary offence committed within the university context.

(ii) Offences committed in the context of your private life

In a series of recent public interviews you made, including interviews with Winston Marshall (8 August 2026), David Starkey (9 August 2026) and Rob Montz (14 August 2026), I have established that you have made various statements in which you assert (among other statements) that racial or ethnic groups differ in intellectual ability for inherited or biological reasons.

Certain statements made during those interviews may be interpreted as advancing ideas concerning the inherent superiority or inferiority of racial or ethnic groups. However, neither freedom of expression nor academic freedom is unlimited. Both may be restricted by law where necessary to protect the rights of others and to prevent discrimination and racism. Belgian anti-discrimination legislation provides for such restrictions. Questions therefore arise as to the compatibility of your public statements with the objectives and provisions of Belgian anti-discrimination legislation, more specifically articles 20 and 21.

Furthermore, in several public interviews, you repeatedly referred to the late professor Jason Arday as being "mentally disabled" and made various other disparaging remarks concerning him, including, among others, describing him as a "worthless scholar". In addition to the disparaging nature of these remarks, the University is deeply concerned by the way you have framed your actions.

By framing your interventions as a 'crusade' aimed at the systematic personal and professional destruction of colleagues, you have demonstrated that your actions extend beyond the permissible bounds of academic debate. Such behaviour strongly suggests an intentional and serious disturbance of the peace, which may fall within the scope of conduct protected against under Chapter V of the Belgian Criminal Code concerning offences against a person's honour or reputation, including the provisions set out in articles 443 et seq.

The aforementioned findings have had a notably negative impact on the functioning of the University and on the well-being of, and cooperation with, students and other members of staff. Such statements conflict with the core of the University's commitment to equality, inclusion and the dignity of all students and staff members and have caused serious distress and concern within the university community, particularly among students and staff members who may reasonably experience such statements as calling into question their equal standing within the academic environment.

Over an extended period of time since your appointment at Ghent University, significant concerns have been raised by members of the Ghent University community and beyond regarding your presence and activities within the institution. These concerns are not isolated or incidental in nature. They have manifested themselves through sustained and visible reactions from students and staff members alike.





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In particular, students at Ghent University established the group "Students Against Cofnas", specifically aimed at opposing your appointment at the University. Furthermore, in May 2026, a petition concerning your appointment was signed by more than 2,000 students. These initiatives illustrate that the concerns surrounding your presence at the University are widespread and have affected a substantial part of the student community.

Similar concerns have also been expressed within the academic environment in which you are employed. A public statement issued by your department in June 2026, which has been removed from public access, indicated that your presence had become a source of significant unrest throughout the workplace. This demonstrates that the concerns are not limited to students but also extend to colleagues and staff members who are required to work within the same academic environment.

In addition, the manner in which you publicly presented your role in the allegations concerning the late professor Jason Arday has reinforced concerns among the university's community that your public interventions seem to develop into targeted campaigns of professional elimination. By framing the 'exposure' of a colleague not as scholarly debate but as a victorious act in a self-described 'hereditary revolution', and by publicly calling to 'purge' institutions of those you label as ideological enemies, you have created a climate of severe psychosocial distress. As a result thereof, staff seem to perceive your presence as an objective threat to their professional standing and personal dignity.

The disturbance is further evidenced by objectified reports and files. Firstly, I have been informed that several confidential files concerning you are currently being processed through Trustpunt. Furthermore, IDEWE's external psychosocial prevention adviser has been requested to carry out a study within the relevant department in order to objectively assess the impact of your employment on the wellbeing of staff and students.

Without prejudice to the confidentiality of those files and without anticipating their outcome, their existence and apparent recurrence provide a further indication that the concerns relating to your conduct extend beyond public debate and are also manifesting themselves within the University's internal working environment. This reinforces the conclusion that the present circumstances have generated a level of tension and unrest that risks adversely affecting the proper functioning of the University and the psychosocial wellbeing of members of its community.

Your continued public invocation of your affiliation with Ghent University while disseminating these views creates a reputational risk. It generates a perception among external audiences that the University endorses or provides a platform for ideologies of racial superiority, which fundamentally undermines our institutional credibility and causes additional distress and uncertainty among staff and students regarding the University's public standing and credibility. The scale of this impact is evidenced by the fact that in the past week alone, the University has received more than 100 emails expressing deep concern, and that number continues to grow.

The current unrest has therefore also given rise to concrete consequences for the University's functioning. The University has been informed that a guest lecturer who was scheduled to teach during the forthcoming academic year has withdrawn from that commitment because of concerns relating to the University's association with you. Furthermore, I have received information that additional consequences may arise in the context of its national and international academic





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relations, including discussions concerning a possible boycott of cooperation with Ghent University on account of that association. These developments demonstrate that the present unrest extends beyond internal concerns and is beginning to affect the University's academic activities and external relationships. These examples are not exhaustive, and further reports continue to be received.

In addition to the initiation of the disciplinary investigation, as mentioned above, I have therefore also decided to suspend you as a precautionary measure in the interests of the service, in accordance with article 55 of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff. In view of the nature and seriousness of the facts, as well as the potential risk to Ghent University, I believe that this preventive suspension should be imposed as a matter of urgency in accordance with article 57(2) of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff, without hearing you prior to this decision.

The scale and persistence of the concerns expressed by students and staff, combined with the recent escalation following your public statements and media appearances, demonstrate that the current situation poses a risk to the proper functioning of the University and to the psychosocial wellbeing of members of its community.

Considering the volume and nature of the complaints, reports and expressions of concern received, the University cannot reasonably exclude the risk that your continued physical presence in the workplace would lead to confrontations, further disruption of the University's activities, or a deterioration of the working and learning environment. Immediate intervention is therefore necessary to preserve institutional stability, safeguard the psychosocial wellbeing of staff and students, and prevent any further escalation of the unrest.

In these circumstances, waiting until after a prior hearing has taken place would not adequately protect the interests safeguarded by the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff. Deferring intervention would leave the current unrest unaddressed and create a real risk of further disruption to the University's functioning.

The preventive suspension takes effect immediately and applies for a period of seven working days (up until and including Friday 28 August 2026).

As provided for in article 56 of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff, the preventive suspension means that you may no longer carry out any teaching, research or service activities as a member of staff at Ghent University and/or on behalf of Ghent University, nor may you participate in conferences or other activities in that capacity, unless you have the express permission of the rector. Furthermore, this preventive suspension entails a ban on contact with Ghent University staff and students, the provisional suspension of your account, and you are denied access to Ghent University's sites and buildings.

You may submit your written response regarding the facts forming the basis of the preventive suspension by email to juridischezaken@UGent.be by Friday 28 August 2026 at the latest. If you wish to be heard in person, you must notify us of this by email as soon as possible and no later than the aforementioned deadline. A suitable date will then be arranged.

If you wish, you may combine your written response to the facts giving rise to both the disciplinary preliminary investigation and the preventive suspension into a single letter. You have the right to be assisted in these proceedings by a solicitor, a trade union representative or an adviser of your choice. You also have the right to inspect the file and to obtain an electronic copy of it.





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Following your written or oral response, I will decide whether to uphold or amend the preventive suspension in the interests of the service, or to lift it, in accordance with article 57(2) of the Disciplinary Regulations for Staff.



Laatste bewerking 12:06 p.m. · 21 aug. 2026 · **121,2K** Weergaven

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