

Athol Williams hits back at UCT's 'aggrieved' claim

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FORMER UCT lecturer Professor Athol Williams has hit back at the institution, saying its latest statement accusing him of being aggrieved over unpaid leave was a means of distracting from the ethical issues he has raised.

These relate to the institution's alleged dealings with companies fingered in state capture.

Williams was reacting to a statement released by UCT yesterday stating that while his whistle-blowing efforts were admirable, his continued slandering of their name was "unfair and unjust".

"The University of Cape Town respects and applauds Mr Athol Williams for his efforts to blow the whistle on fraud and corruption. Regrettably, Mr Williams has again raised and repeated multiple, very serious allegations against UCT in public statements. This is unfortunate and unjust," said UCT.

"Mr Williams seems to be aggrieved that UCT applied the necessary rules applicable to unpaid leave. In applying these rules, UCT was acting consistently, as it would in the case of all staff employed by the university.



PROFESSOR ATHOL WILLIAMS

"Mr Williams consistently claims UCT does not want to engage him and made claims that he was "receiving no help" and then "offered money by UCT". UCT totally rejects these distortions of fact and denies these claims."

The university said there was no factual basis that Williams' resignation, or their acceptance of it, was somehow connected to his whistle-blowing activity. In March, Williams, a former senior lecturer at UCT's Graduate School of Business (GSB), testified at the Zondo Commission, providing information relating to the SA Revenue Services and his former job at management consultancy firm Bain.

In response to UCT, Williams said

his issues were not labour-related, asking why they would not "make public or share with me the ombudsman's investigation report into their involvement with state capture companies?"

"Mine are not labour or employment issues as UCT make out. This is their way of distracting from the core issues. Mine are ethical concerns for our country. How do we know UCT isn't captured? We need to know about their dealings with McKinsey and any other company known to be involved with state capture – do they have dealings with Gupta companies, Deloitte, KPMG, Bain, etc? They must explain this and come clean."

Williams also reiterated that UCT did not support him as a whistle-blower.

"Their statement that they supported me as a whistle-blower is silly because they then make reference to things they did when they hired me – I was not a whistle-blower then.

"I am indeed aggrieved; I'm aggrieved by their protection of state capture companies and thus furthering the aims of state capture. I think most South Africans are similarly aggrieved by institutions like UCT preaching one thing, like ethics and anti-state capture, but then acting the opposite," Williams said.