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St. Cloud Times

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2019 ■ SCTIMES.COM

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ACLU: Censure violated rights

Letter led to action against council member

Jenny Berg St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

ST. CLOUD — The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota is criticizing St. Cloud City Council for censuring George Hontos, which the ACLU states was “inappropriate” and violates Hontos’ free speech rights.

The council voted Sept. 9 to censure Hontos after he wrote a letter to the St. Cloud Times criticizing changes to the public comment procedure at council meetings. The change made earlier this year moved the public comment period to the end of the meeting, where it is not broadcast nor included in meeting minutes.

Some members said writing the letter was a violation of the council’s rules of conduct because they said it undermined a majority vote of the council.

“We urge the city council to immediately amend its rules and rescind the censure of (Hontos),” states the letter written by David P. McKinney, staff attorney for the ACLU. “Specifically, we believe that rules six, seven, and eight appear to violate the First Amendment in that they broadly prohibit a substantial amount of protected speech.”

The ACLU sent a formal letter

See **CENSURE**, Page 8A

Cutting back on faculty expected to save school \$840,000



Students walk on the St. Cloud State University campus Thursday. The school is targeting four librarians, a theater professor and three philosophy professors for layoffs. PHOTOS BY DAVE SCHWARZ/DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM

Acclaimed philosopher 1 of 8 on SCSU layoff list

Nora G. Hertel St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

ST. CLOUD — Philosophy of science is an important field right now, considering things like the anti-vaccination movement, said St. Cloud State University philosophy professor Michael Shaffer.

Shaffer specializes in the philosophy of science, the consideration of



SCSU is expecting a budget shortfall next year of \$3 million.

how science works and how the public digests it. He has been published and lauded for his work around the world.

Yet Shaffer’s time at St. Cloud State is drawing to a close, as he’s on a list of eight professors to be laid off at the end of the academic year.

He’s taught classes called Evidence and Pseudoscience, Business Ethics

See **LAYOFFS**, Page 6A

Colleen Moriarty, executive director of Hunger Solutions Minnesota, center, and other nonprofit leaders oppose changes to SNAP. KELLY SMITH/AP



More than 35,000 could lose food stamp access

Kelly Smith
Tribune Content Agency

Nonprofit leaders are pushing back on a federal proposal to change who’s eligible for food stamps that could cause 35,500 Minnesotans to lose access to food assistance.

On Thursday, food shelf leaders and others voiced opposition to the rule change for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly referred to as food stamps, ahead of Monday’s deadline for public input.

See **FOOD STAMP**, Page 6A

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