

Academic crisis hits NT: group

A crisis existed in academic leadership in the Northern Territory, a spokesman for Northern Territory college academics said.

College Academics Federation NT president, Dr Trevor James, said Government interference in the appointment of principal to the redesignated Darwin Institute of Technology, was unprecedented in advanced education in Australia.

Dr James, who is on leave in New Zealand, slammed the NT Government's action in an urgent telegram to the Chief Minister, Mr Ian Tuxworth, yesterday.

"No academic institution in advanced education can endure this type of interference," Dr James said.

He said he had only just learned of the changes in advanced education administration.

"Rationalisation of

administrative structures may be commended but some aspects are of great concern," Dr James said.

"To introduce substantial and controversial changes arbitrarily at a time when most staff are on leave undermines trust in government.

College

"The appointment by Government of principal to the Northern Territory's only advanced education institution, without advice from college council or staff or open advertisement, is without acceptable precedent in advanced education in Australia.

"No advanced education institution can maintain credibility under these circumstances for either its academic leadership or standards," he said.

Dr James said there was a crisis in academic leadership in the Territory and clarification was urgent.